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Archie
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THE **FINISHER**

MEETS

Archie

48 PAGES!

NO ADS!



**THE
CROSSOVER
YOU'VE BEEN
DREADING!**



THE PUNISHER Archie

"WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE"

BATTON LASH

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JOHN BUSCEMA

PUNISHER ARTIST

STAN GOLDBERG

ARCHIE ARTIST

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INTRODUCTION: ARCHIE MEETS THE PUNISHER



It started as a joke. It was an idea that would capture the attention of comic book collectors, an idea that had the potential to send our sales through the roof. The publishers at Archie Comics, which are Richard Goldwater and Michael Silberkleit, liked the big sales part but hesitated at the storyline. It went something like this:

Archie arrives at good ol' Riverdale High. Security people are installing metal detectors. Kids have been coming to school with weapons. When he arrives home, he notices the door has been left open. The house has been ransacked. There's blood everywhere. His parents have been massacred. The police aren't doing much. After all, this happens all the time. Archie enlists the aid of The Punisher. . .time to get even.

While this does seem to be what's popular, the idea was denied serious consideration. . .I wonder why? We revived the publishers, Richard & Michael, by pouring Gatorade all over them. I'm told, it makes you feel like a winner.

However, when I related this story to Batton Lash (creator of Wolf & Byrd, Counselors of the Macabre) and how I'd love to do something with this, he said, "I think I can do it. Let me give it a try."

And so, in a dimly lit San Diego restaurant, amidst messy sparerib bones and dirty napkins, "Project A" was born.



INTRODUCTION: THE PUNISHER MEETS ARCHIE



I thought it was a joke.

Victor Gorelick and I have been joking with each other for over twenty years. He's the guy who gave me my first job in the comic book industry. (Remember that! Victor trained me. He taught me everything I know. . .but, sadly, not everything he knows. Write to him and complain the next time you read something in a Marvel Comic which annoys you. It'll serve him right for not preparing me better!)

Anyway, the proposal for what we eventually began to call "Project A" arrived completely without warning. It consisted of a quick note from Victor, a short synopsis and two cover sketches.

Hearing me laugh out loud and fearing that I had finally flipped, Senior Executive Editor Mark Gruenwald stuck his head into my office. While he was laughing at the covers, I read the synopsis. Batton Lash had done the impossible, effortlessly mixing two wildly disparate universes while completely respecting the integrity of each individual character. Wow!

I immediately rushed the proposal over to Punisher overlord Don Daley. He loved it.

So did publisher Mike Hobson and president Terry Stewart.

Later that same day, I called Victor to inform him of Marvel's desire to pursue this project, our first major crossover with another comic book company in many a year.

Needless to say, he thought I was joking.

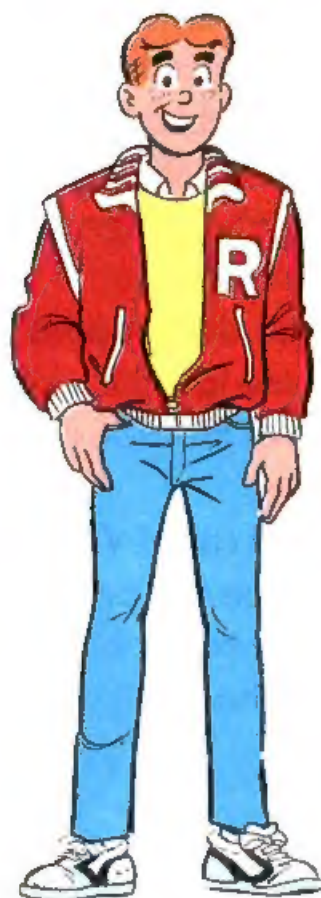


Tom V.

When Frank Castle witnessed the death of his family at the hands of the criminal syndicate, he vowed that innocent people would never again suffer his wife's and children's fates. Using his lethal training as a Marine, Castle wages a private war against those who would break the law...letting the punishment fit the crime. Enter the world of the Punisher.



Archie has often been described as the typical American teenager: always asking too many questions, always getting into trouble, intensely loyal to his parents, his school and his community, which in Archie's case is Riverdale, U.S.A. Archie's plight in matters of the heart is adolescently stark. He's torn between two opposing love interests: Betty, "the girl next door", and Veronica, a spoiled daughter of affluence. Enter Riverdale, the world of Archie Andrews.





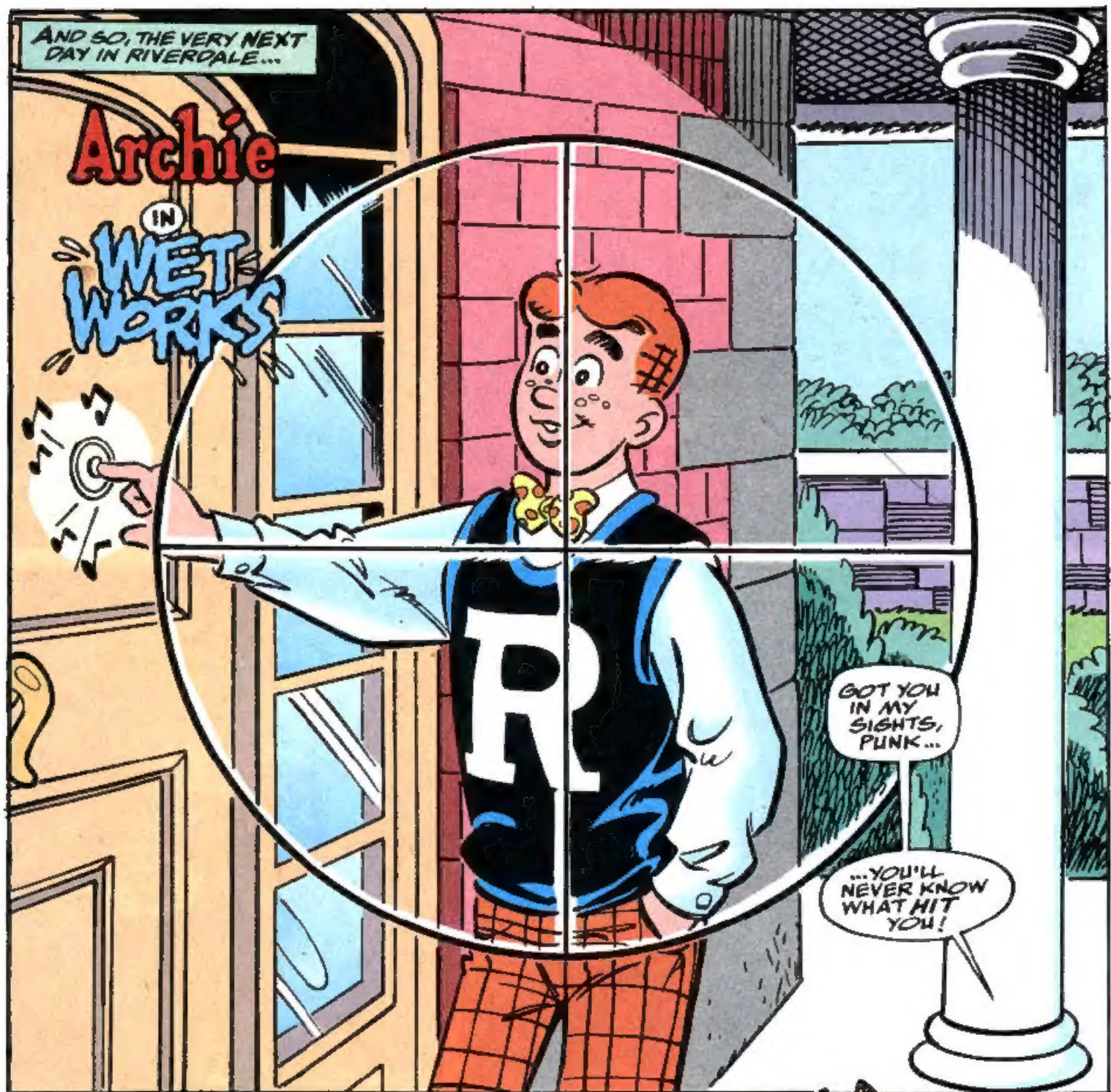


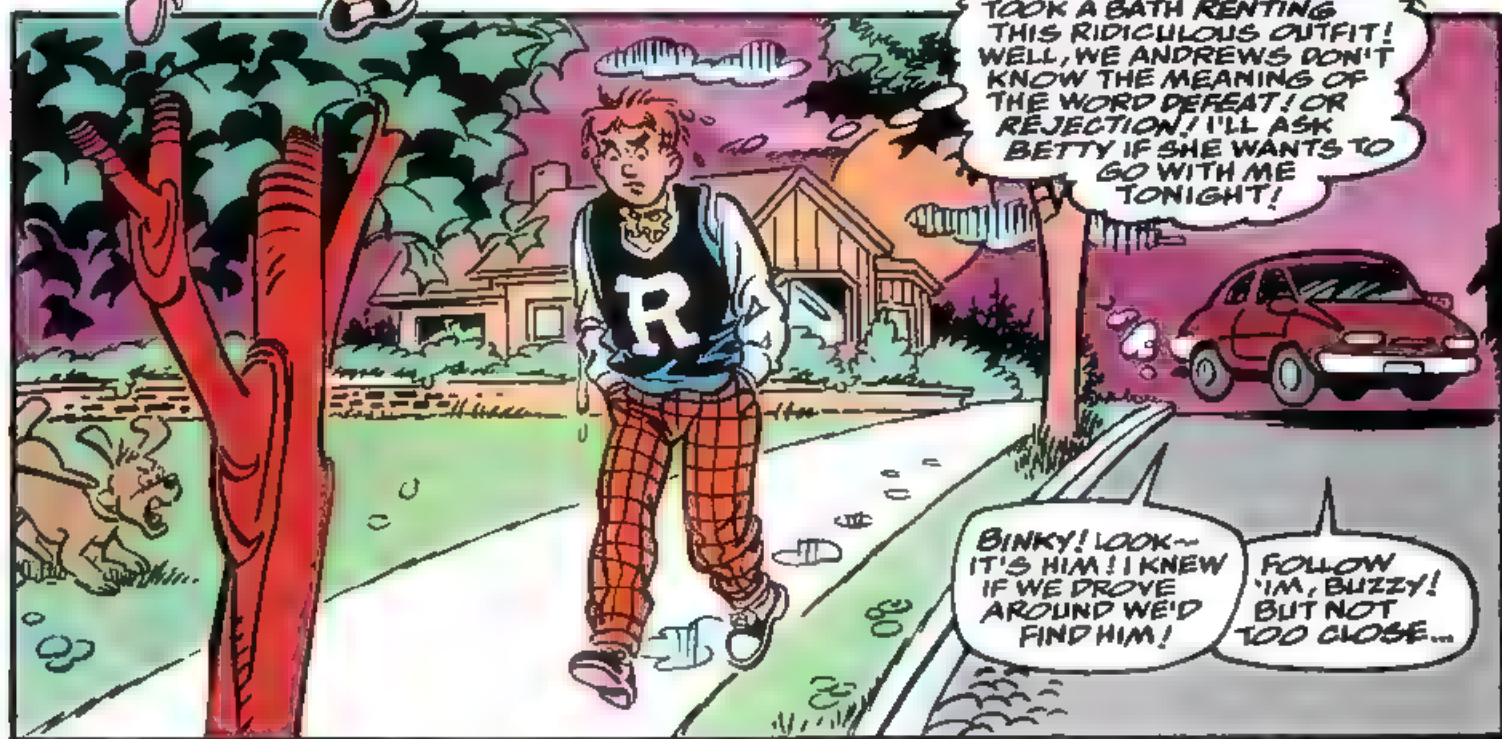
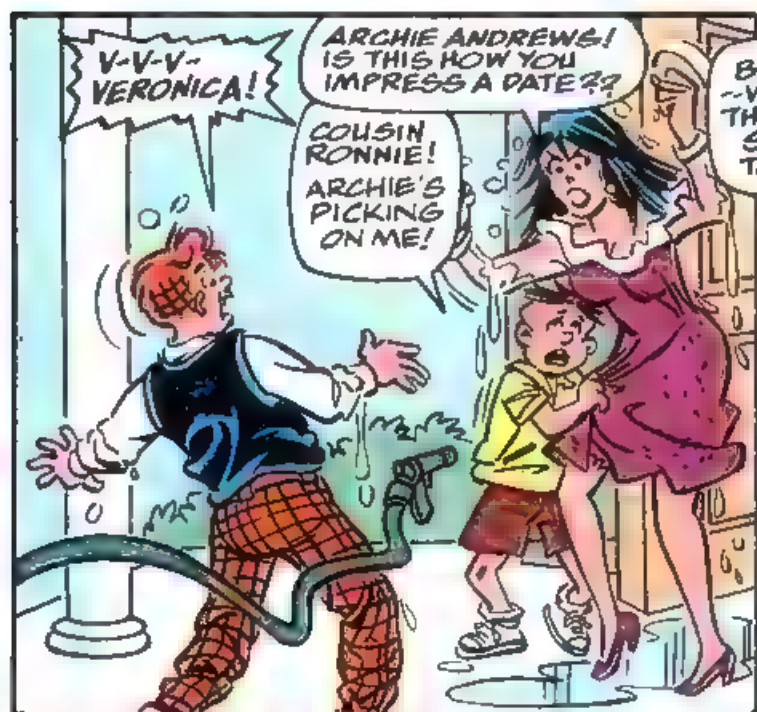
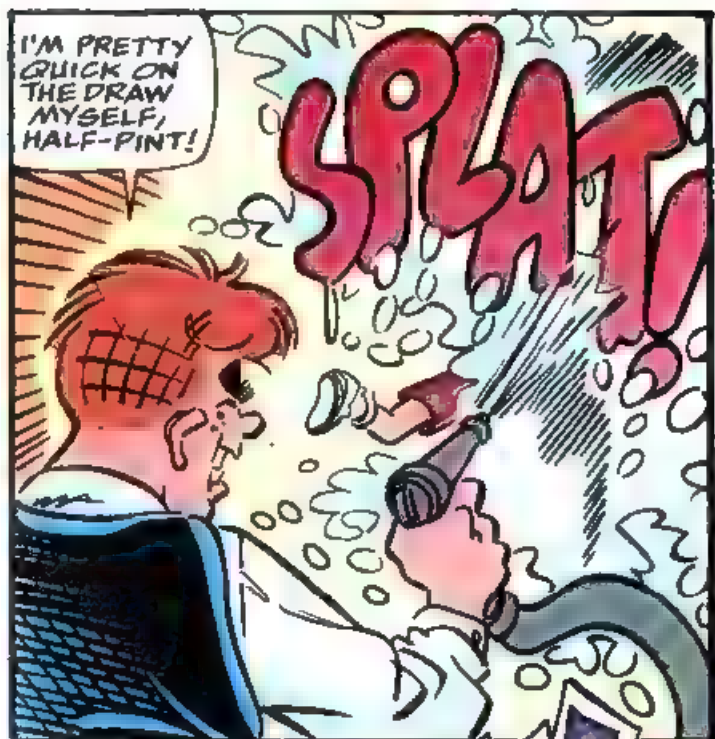
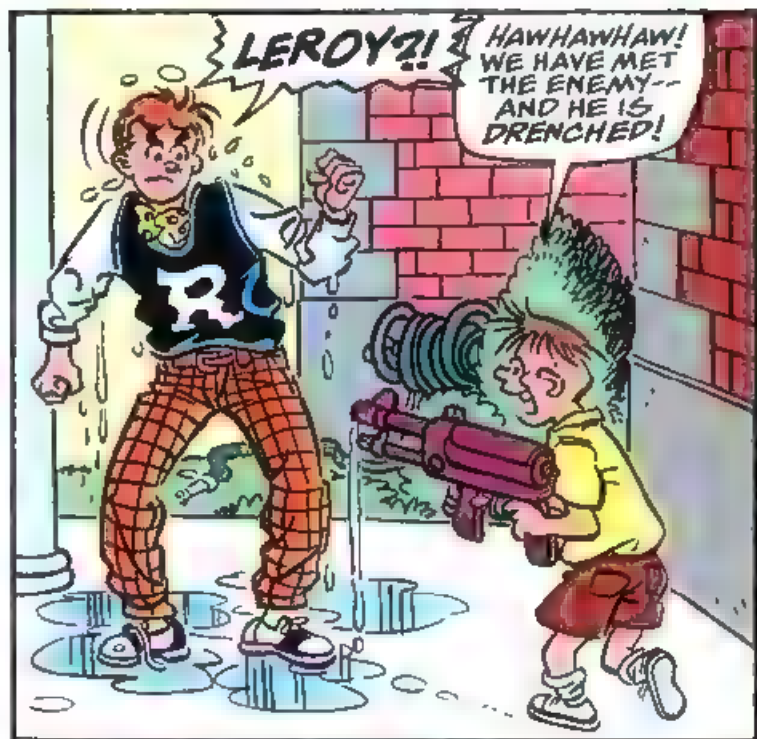


AND SO, THE VERY NEXT
DAY IN RIVERDALE...

Archie

**IN
WET
WORKS**





~YOU KNOW
HOW DANGEROUS
HE IS!~

HEY--
THAT AIN'T
FUNNY!

ON THE
CONTRARY--

HEY,
KIDS!
COMICS

FLIP MASON TRIBUTE SAT.NITE

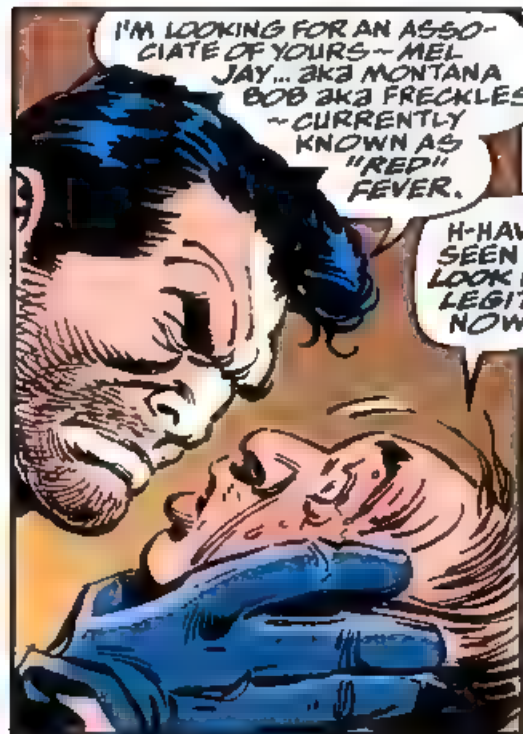
~THIS'LL
KILL
YOU!

AFTER FRANK CASTLE
WATCHED HIS FAMILY
BE SLAUGHTERED BY
THE MOB, HE VOWED TO
WAGE A ONE-MAN WAR
AGAINST CRIME AS~

THE
PUNISHER

WAR JOURNAL,
ENTRY 769446:
AFTER QUARRY ELUDED
ME IN CITY, I PICK UP
HIS TRAIL IN SUBURBS.
DATA ON QUARRY SAYS
HE ONCE RAN RACKETS
WITH PROPRIETOR
OF COMEDY CLUB. YOU
COULD SAY THAT I
PULLED NAME OF
ESTABLISHMENT OUT
OF A HAT...

SCHTICK TO YOUR GUNS!



I'M LOOKING FOR AN ASSOCIATE OF YOURS-- MEL JAY... AKA MONTANA BOB AKA FRECKLES-- CURRENTLY KNOWN AS "RED" FEVER.

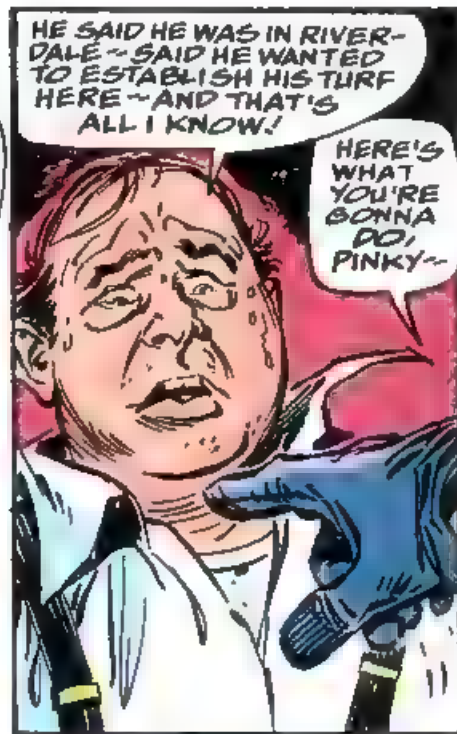
H-HAVEN'T SEEN 'IM. LOOK I'M LEGIT NOW...



THINK. JOKE WITH ME, AND YOU'LL BE LAUGHING YOUR HEAD OFF.

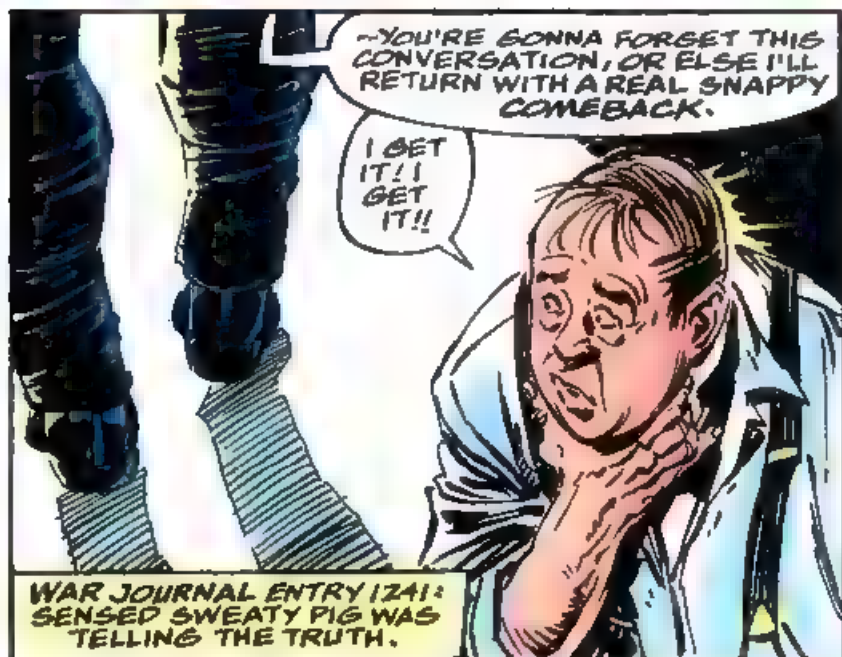
OKAY, OKAY! HE CALLED EARLIER. WANTED TO COME BY-- I SAID FORGET IT. TOO BUSY LINING UP COMICS.

I'M SERIOUS!



HE SAID HE WAS IN RIVERDALE-- SAID HE WANTED TO ESTABLISH HIS TURF HERE-- AND THAT'S ALL I KNOW!

HERE'S WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO, PINKY--



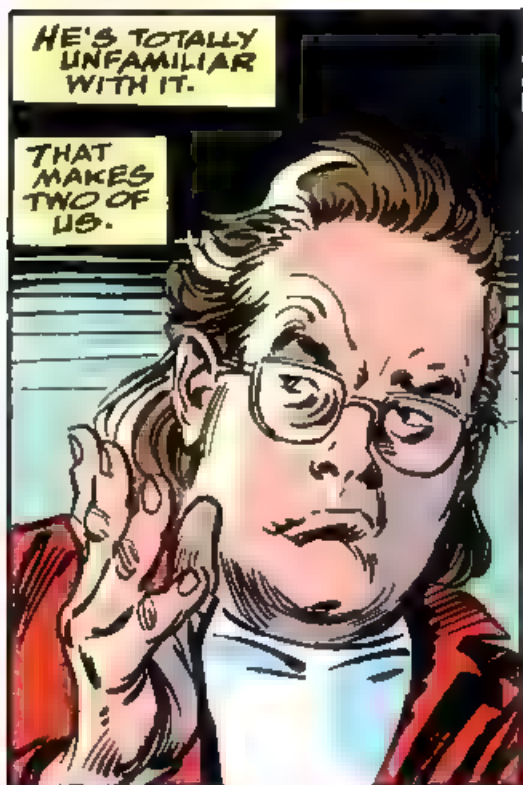
--YOU'RE GONNA FORGET THIS CONVERSATION, OR ELSE I'LL RETURN WITH A REAL SNAPPY COMEBACK.

I GET IT!! I GET IT!!

WAR JOURNAL ENTRY 1241: SENSED SWEATY PIG WAS TELLING THE TRUTH.



I'VE GOT AGING WHIZ KID MICRO CHIP WORKING WITH ME ON THIS ONE. I BRIEF HIM AND ASK WHAT INFORMATION HE HAS ON RIVERDALE.

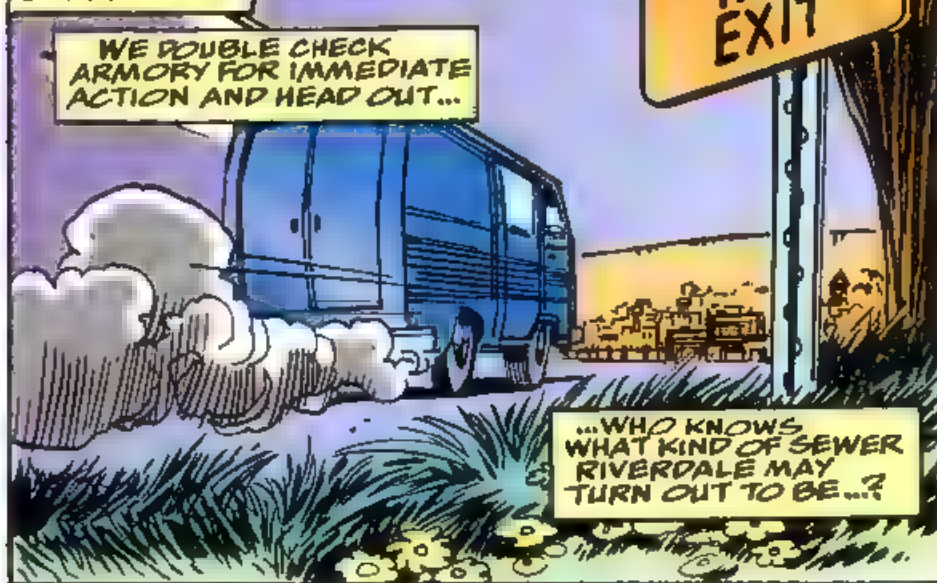


HE'S TOTALLY UNFAMILIAR WITH IT.

THAT MAKES TWO OF US.

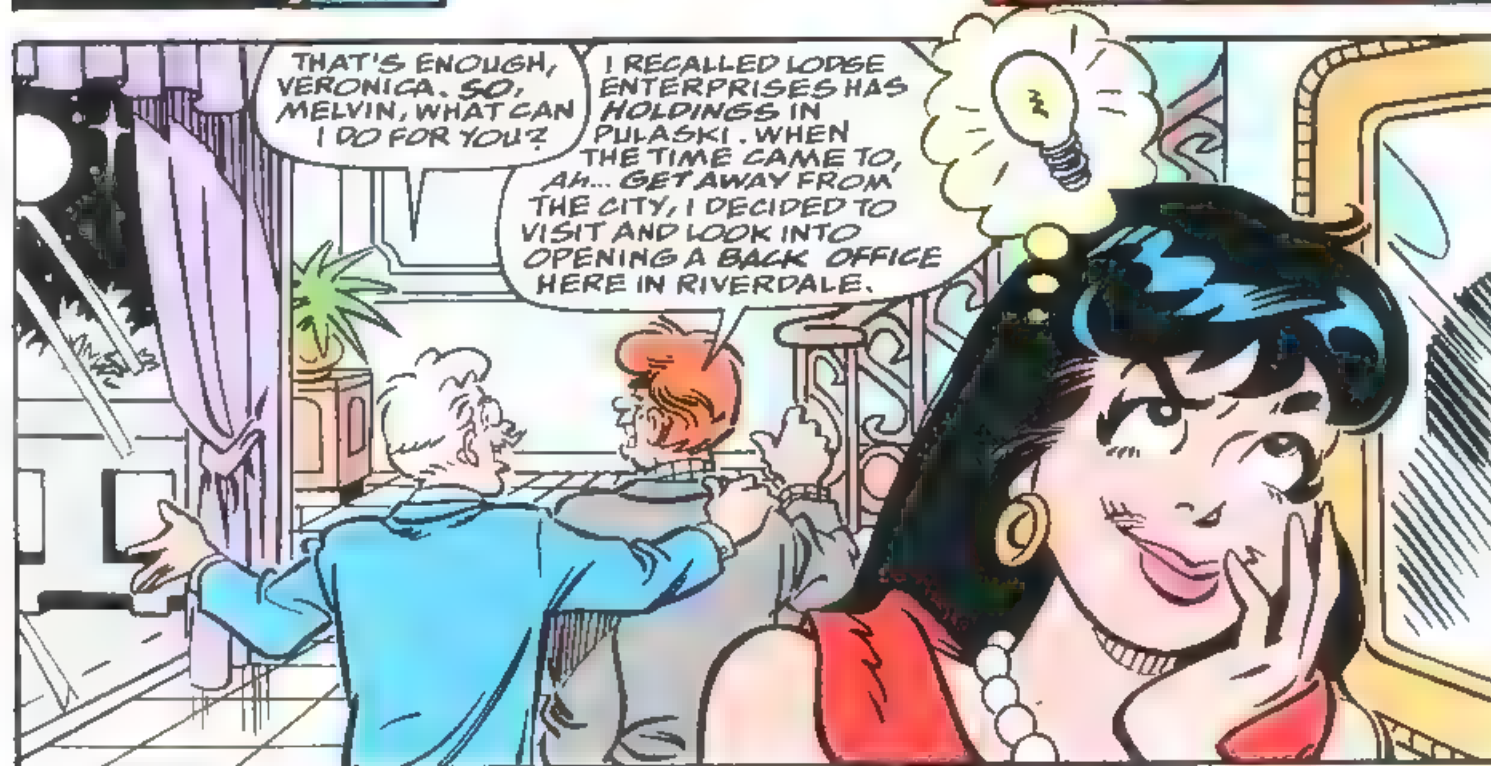
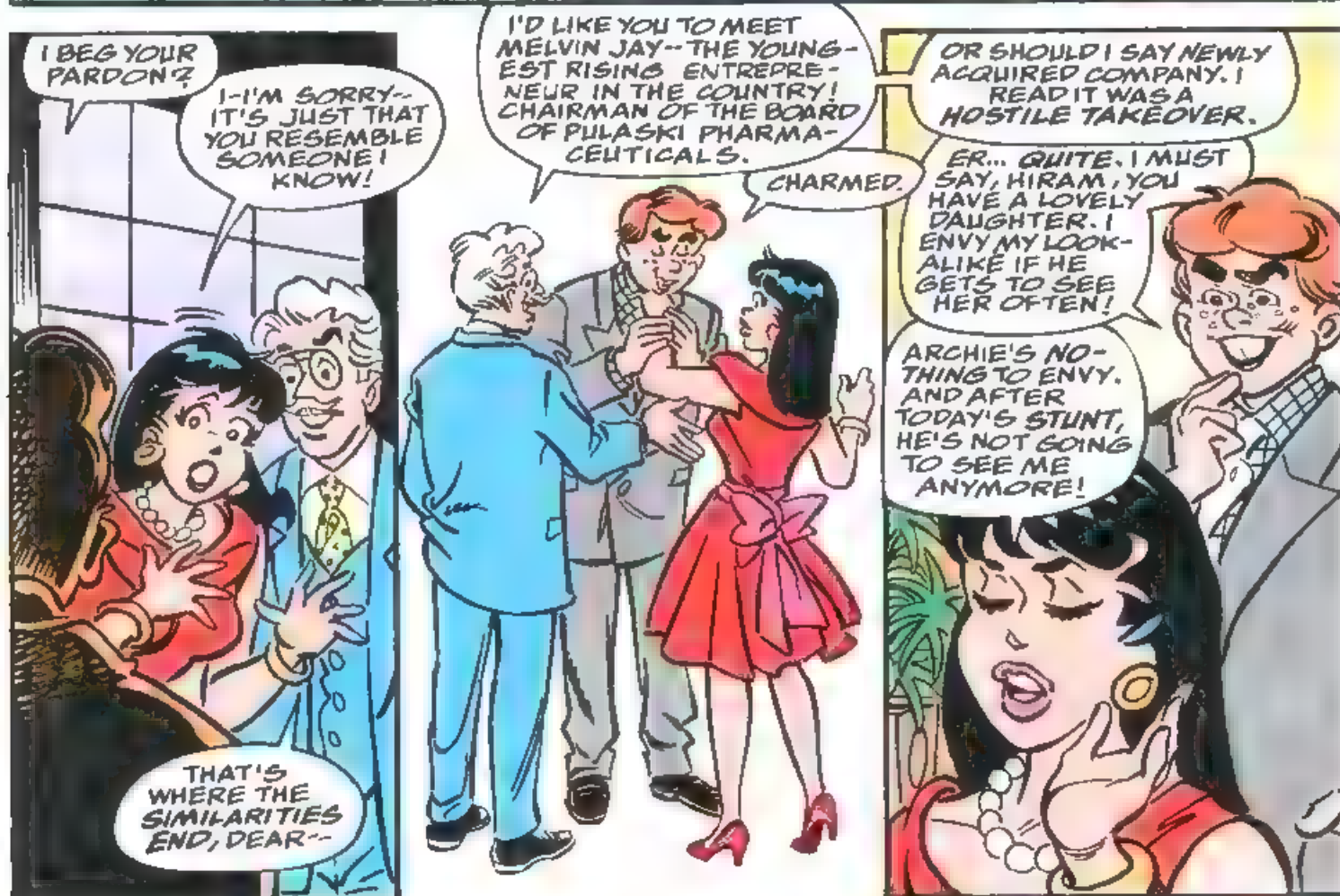
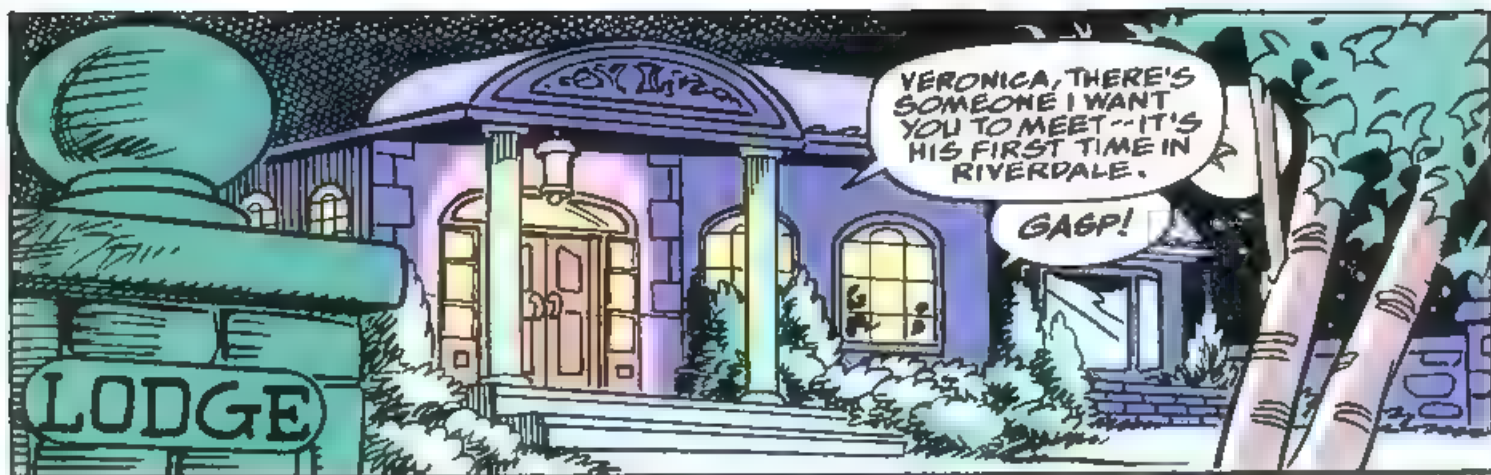
MICRO BRINGS UP A GOOD POINT... WE'VE STUMBLERD ON INNOCUOUS SOUNDING PROVINCES BEFORE THAT TURN OUT TO BE HOTBEDS OF CORRUPTION.

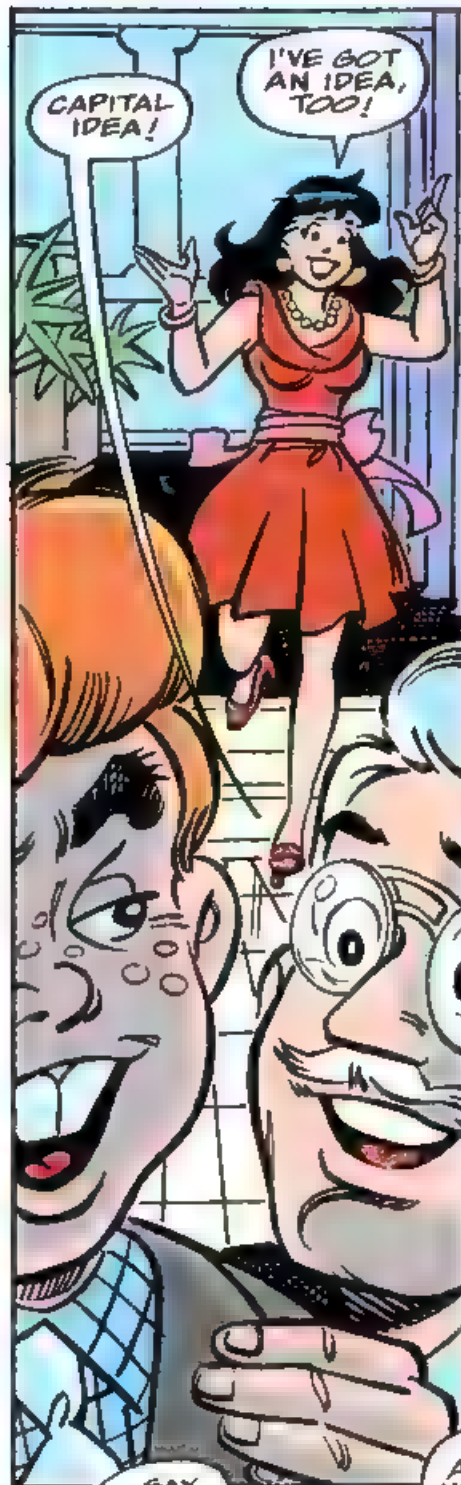
WE DOUBLE CHECK ARMORY FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION AND HEAD OUT...



RIVERDALE NEXT EXIT

...WHO KNOWS WHAT KIND OF SEWER RIVERDALE MAY TURN OUT TO BE...?





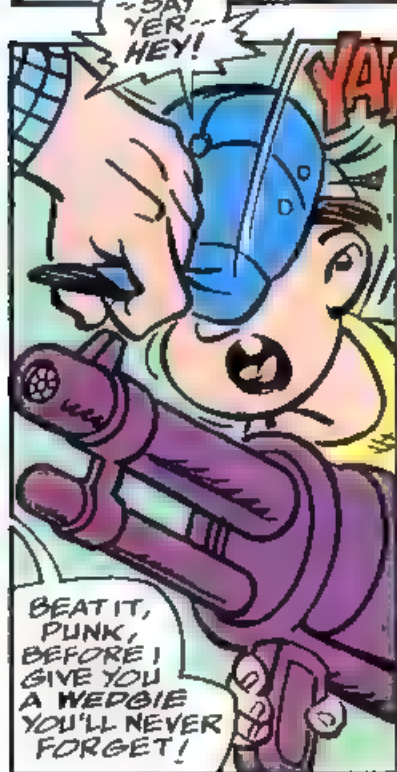
CAPITAL IDEA!

I'VE GOT AN IDEA, TOO!

THERE'S A 1950'S-STYLE DANCE AT THE SCHOOL TONIGHT! EVERYONE WILL BE THERE!

VERONICA-- YOU'RE PUTTING MELVIN ON THE SPOT HERE!

ON THE CONTRARY, MR. LODGE-- IT SOUNDS LIKE FUN!



--SAY YER-- HEY!

YANK!

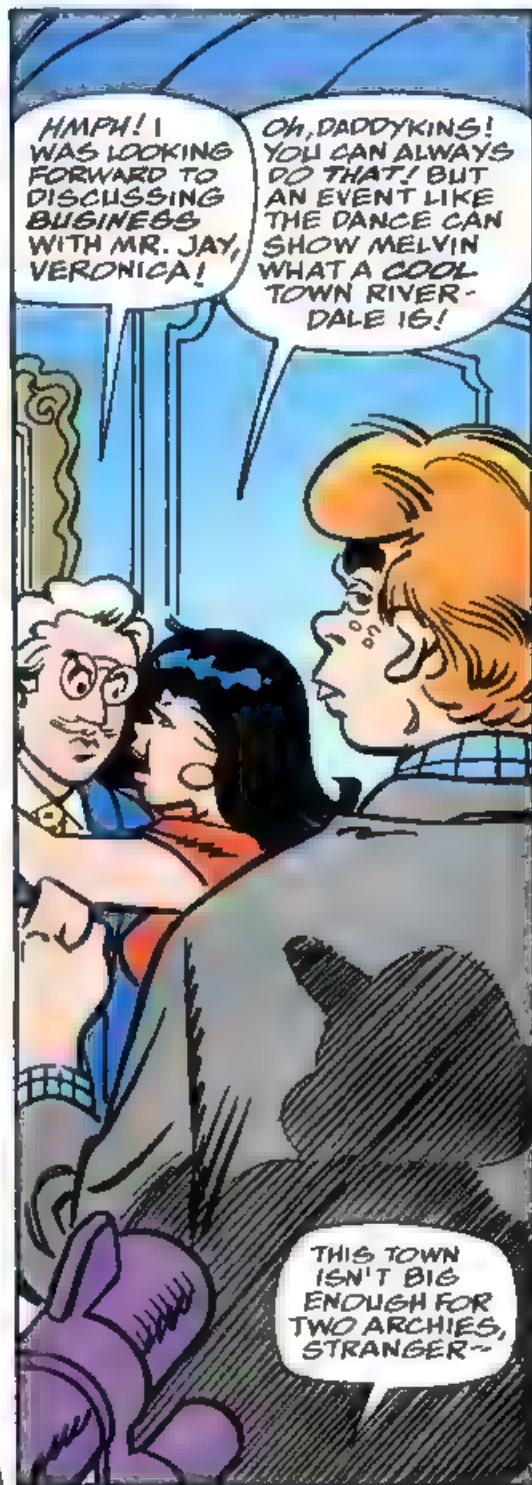
YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE MY MAJOR WEAKNESS, MELVIN--

THE PLEASURE IS ALL MINE, MR. LODGE.

THIS WILL BE SO MUCH FUN!

--I CAN'T SAY NO TO MY DAUGHTER.

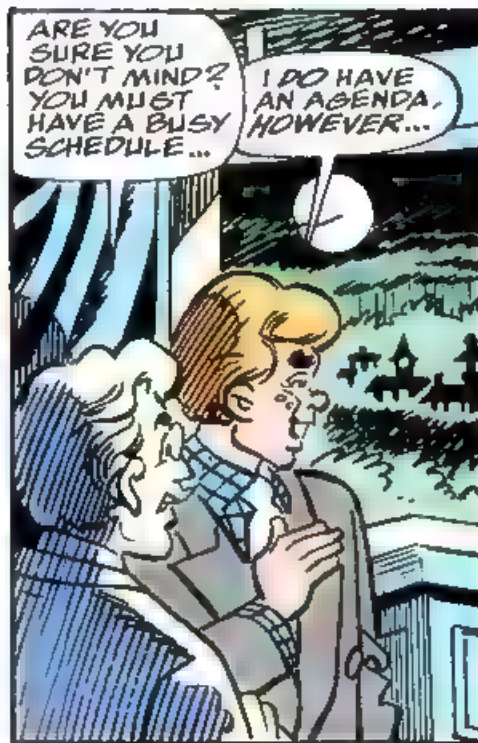
BEAT IT, PUNK, BEFORE I GIVE YOU A WEDGIE YOU'LL NEVER FORGET!



HMPH! I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO DISCUSSING BUSINESS WITH MR. JAY, VERONICA!

OH, DADDYKINS! YOU CAN ALWAYS DO THAT! BUT AN EVENT LIKE THE DANCE CAN SHOW MELVIN WHAT A COOL TOWN RIVERDALE IS!

THIS TOWN ISN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR TWO ARCHIES, STRANGER--



ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T MIND? YOU MUST HAVE A BUSY SCHEDULE...

I DO HAVE AN AGENDA, HOWEVER...

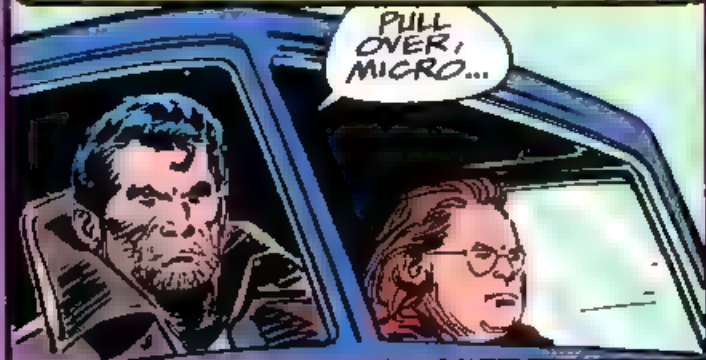
"...RIVERDALE LOOKS
LIKE MY KIND OF TOWN!"



CASTLE AND I
ARRIVED IN
RIVERDALE AT
0200 HOURS...

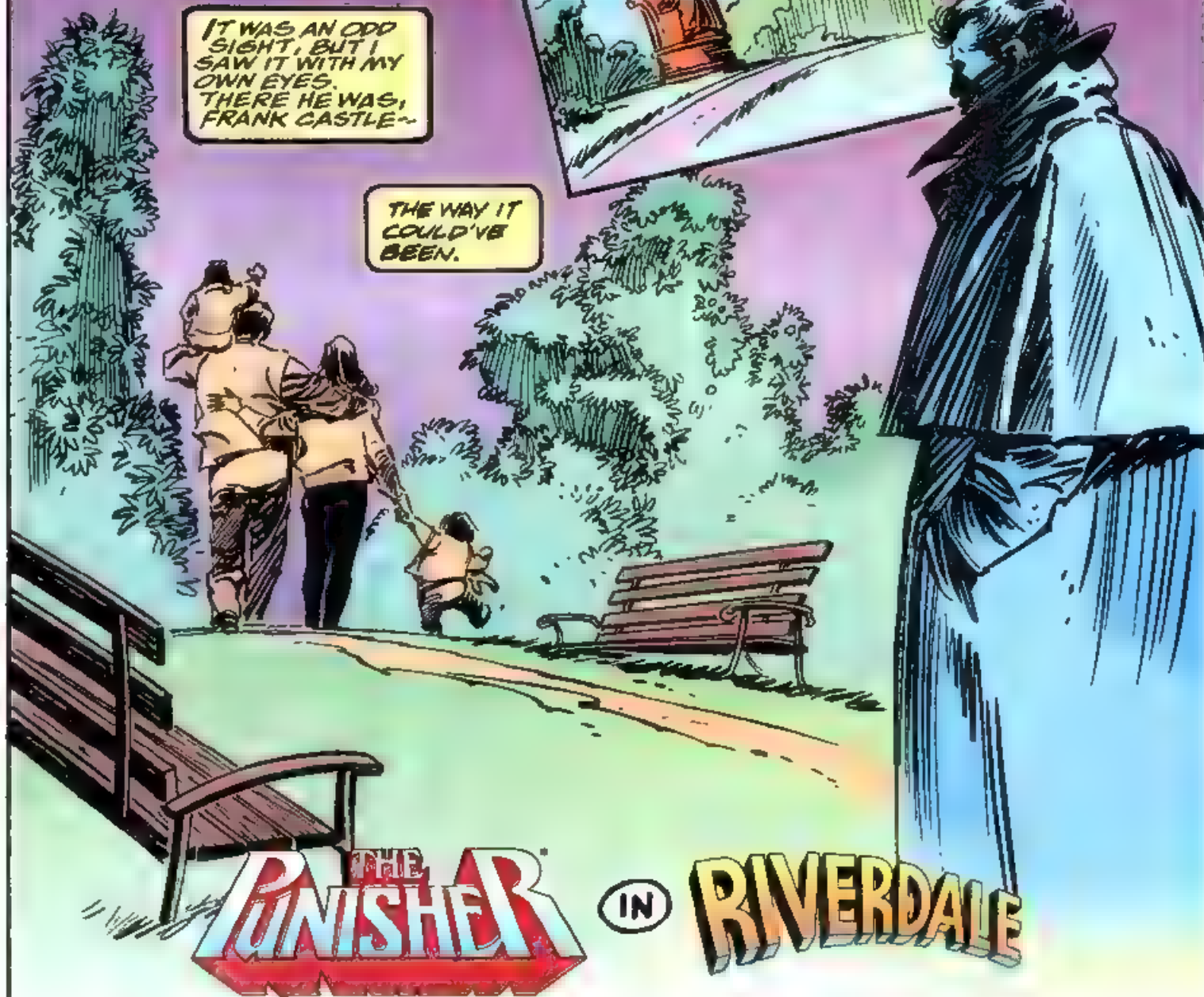
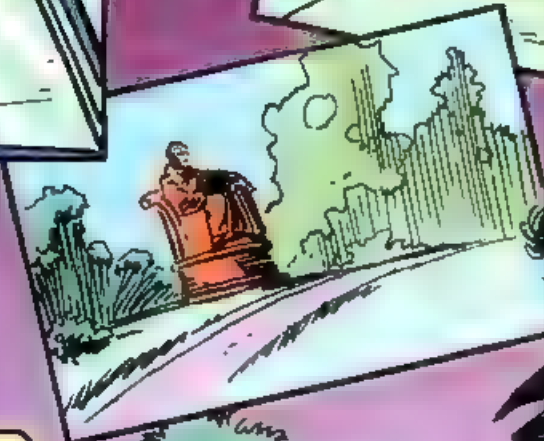
...CRUISED THE STREETS TO GET LAY OF
THE LAND. CASTLE HAD A FUNNY LOOK IN
HIS EYE; ONE I DON'T SEE VERY OFTEN...

PULL
OVER,
MICRO...



IT WAS AN ODD
SIGHT, BUT I
SAW IT WITH MY
OWN EYES.
THERE HE WAS,
FRANK CASTLE~

THE WAY IT
COULD'VE
BEEN.



THE
PUNISHER

IN

RIVERDALE

SOME
TOWN,
eh,
FRANK?

CASTLE DIDN'T SAY
A WORD. HE DIDN'T
HAVE TO. I COULD
READ HIS MIND ON
THIS ONE. THE FEDS
WANT 'RED' FEVER
SO BAD, THEY MADE
A DEAL WITH CASTLE
TO BRING HIM IN ~
ALIVE.

'RED' FEVER'S BEEN UP AND DOWN
THE LADDER AS A DRUGLORD.
WHEN ONE BUSINESS CRASHES
AND BURNS, HE'S QUICK TO RISE
FROM THE ASHES AND START
FRESH. HE'S GOT THE FEVER.

CASTLE WILL PLAY BALL BECAUSE HE CAN GET
INFORMATION OUT OF RED ABOUT NEIGHBOR-
HOOD DEALERS, PUSHERS, AND MOBSTERS
ALL ALONG THE EASTERN SEABOARD. THAT
KIND OF OPPORTUNITY JUSTIFIES CASTLE
LOWERING HIS STANDARDS TO WORK FOR
THE GOVERNMENT.

WHETHER HE'S MONTANA BOB, "FRECKLES"
BABYFACE OR CEO MELVIN JAY, 'RED'
FEVER HAS A REPUTATION AS A SURVIVOR.
SOMEONE WHO WILL FIND NEW TURF
AND STAKE HIS CLAIM.

HEY, LOOK! TREAT
YOU TO A MALT,
FRANK?

DIDN'T
THINK
PLACES
LIKE
THIS
STILL
EXIST-
ED.

YOU
COULD SAY
IT'S AN
ENDANGERED
SPECIES.

LATER,
MICRO...

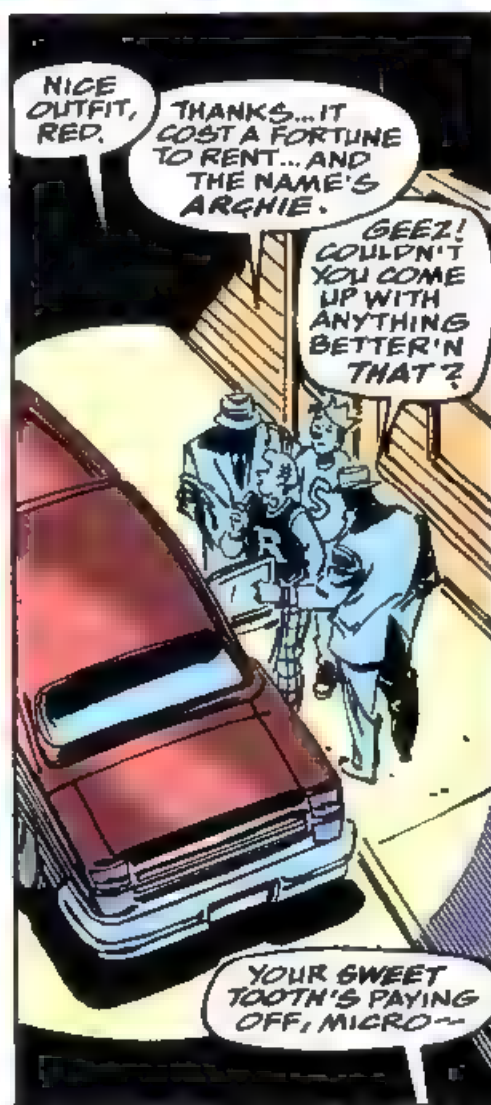
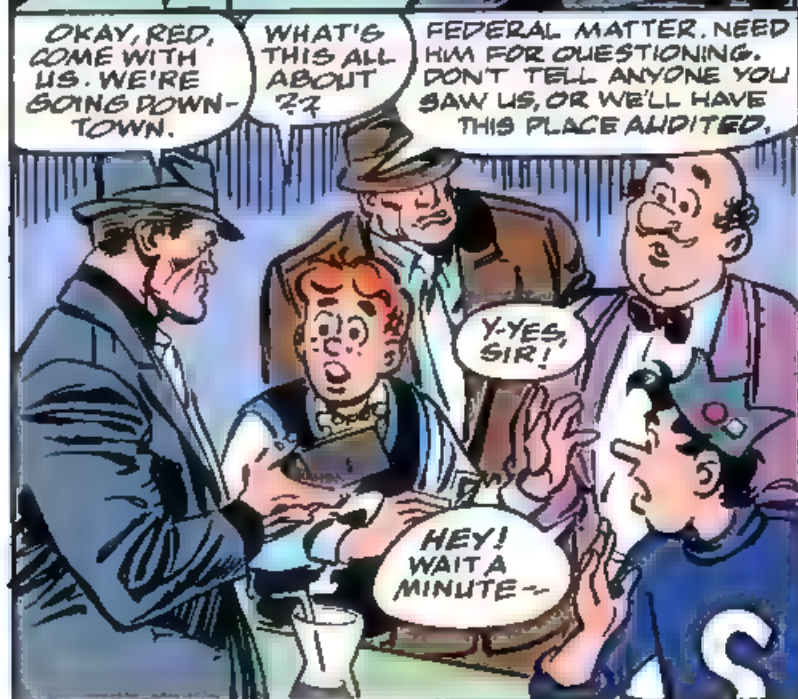
...LET'S FAMILIARIZE
OURSELVES WITH
THE TOWN, FIRST..

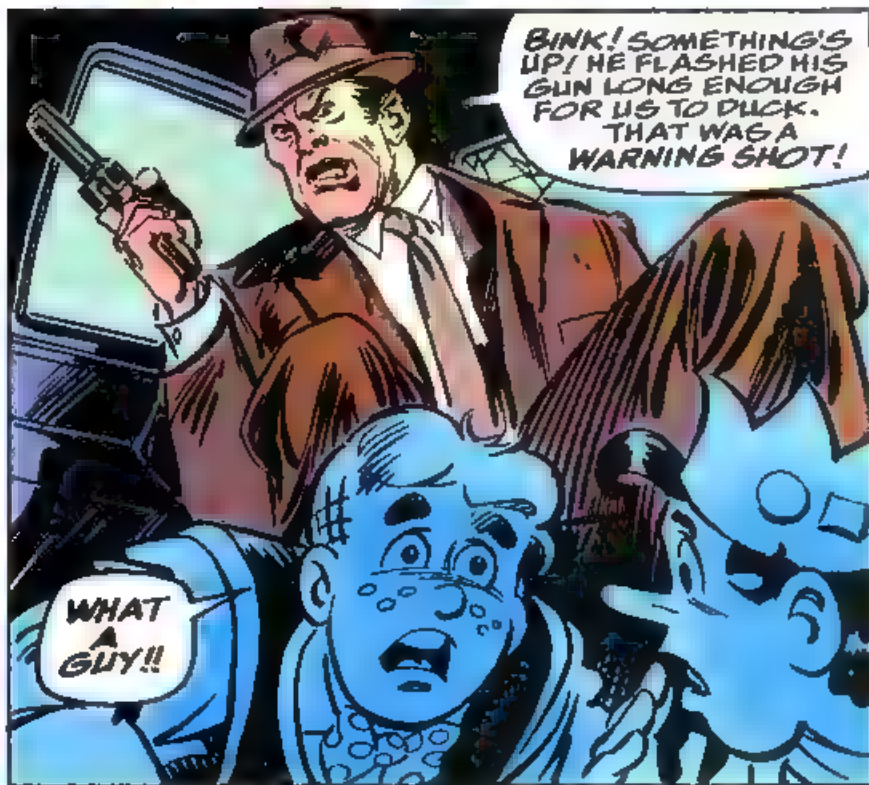
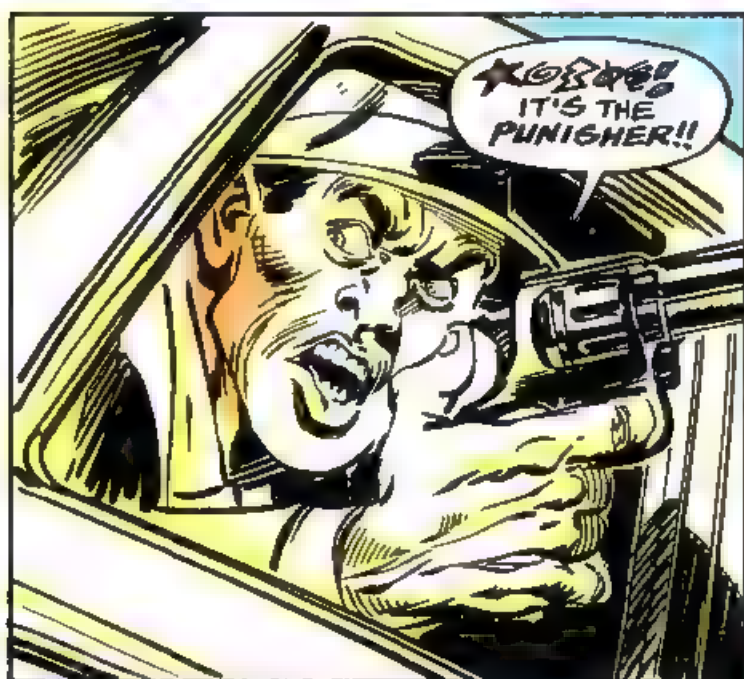
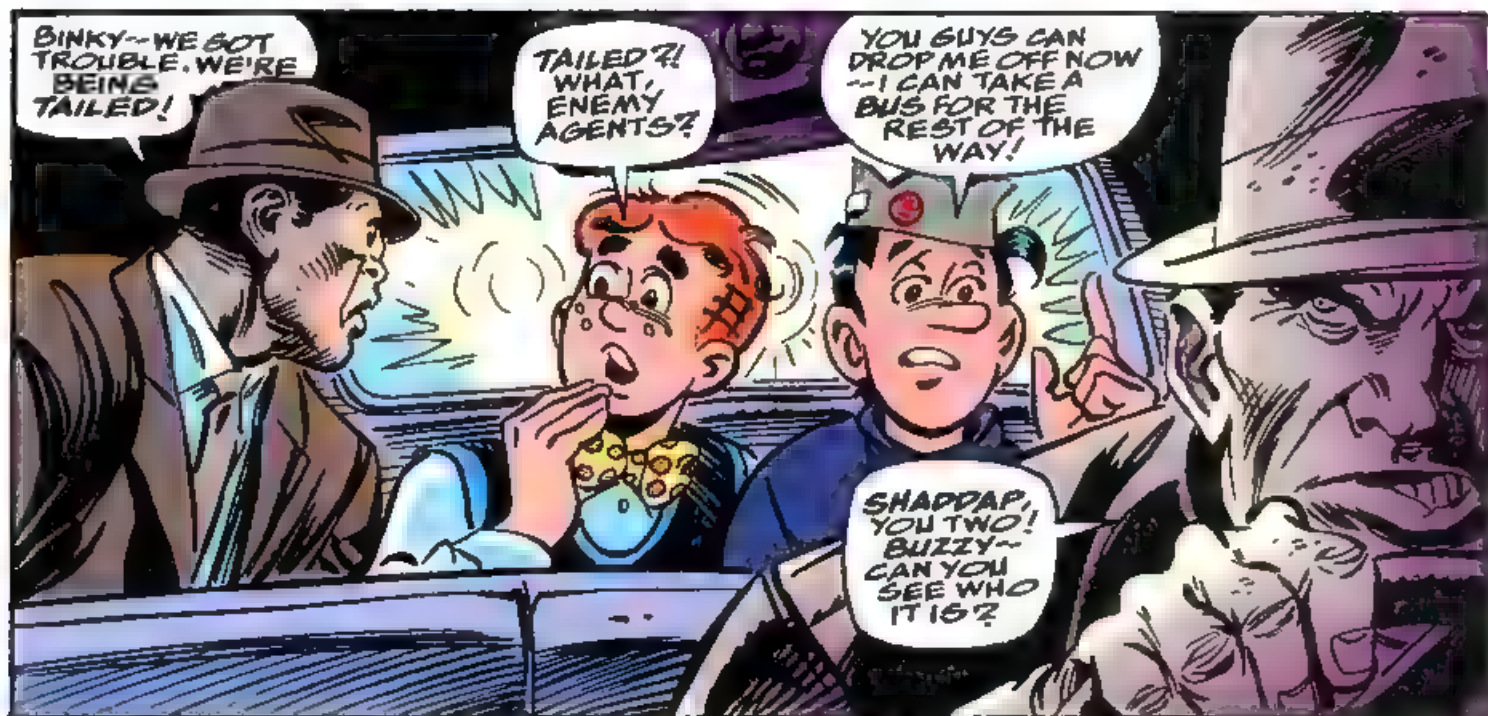
RATS! BETTY'S
GONE TO THE
HOP ALREADY!
PROBABLY WITH
REBBIE!

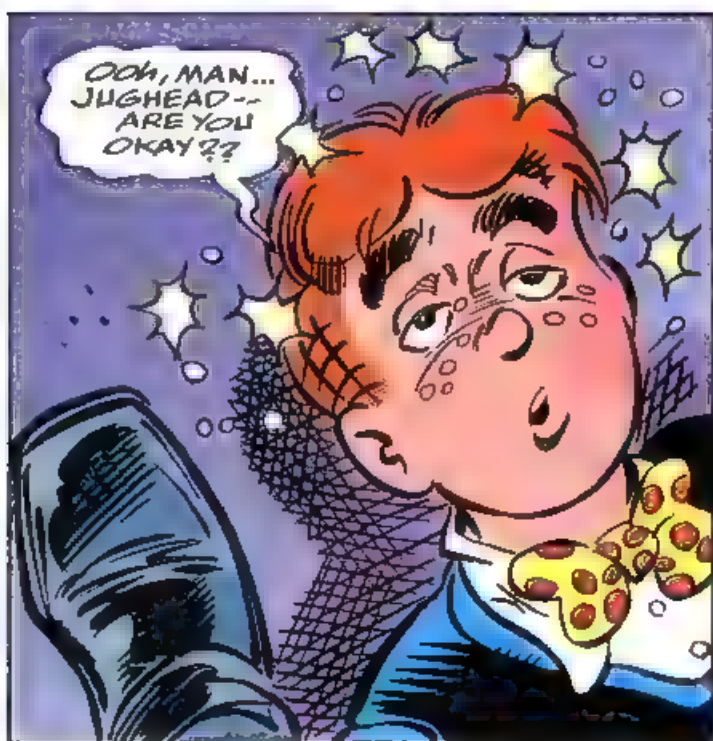
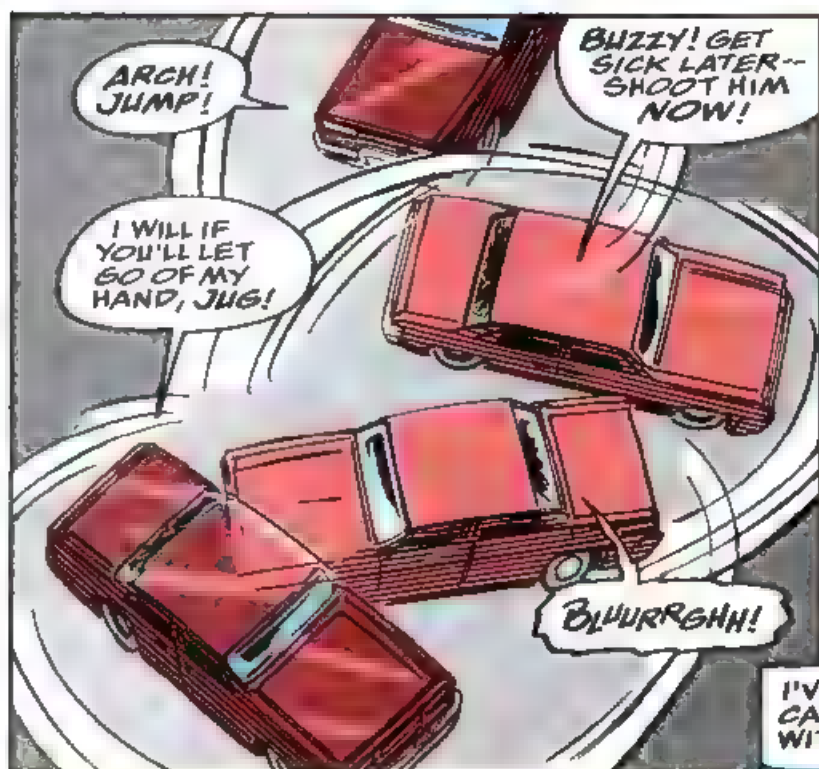
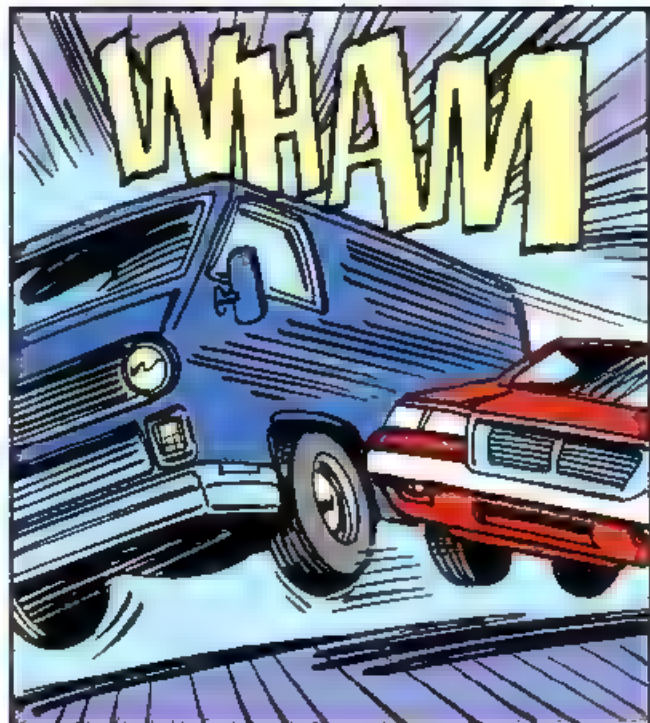
AH, DON'T LET IT GET TO
YOU, ARCH. YOU'RE LUCKY
YOU RAN INTO ME! I'LL
GLADLY HELP YOU DROWN
YOUR SORROWS!

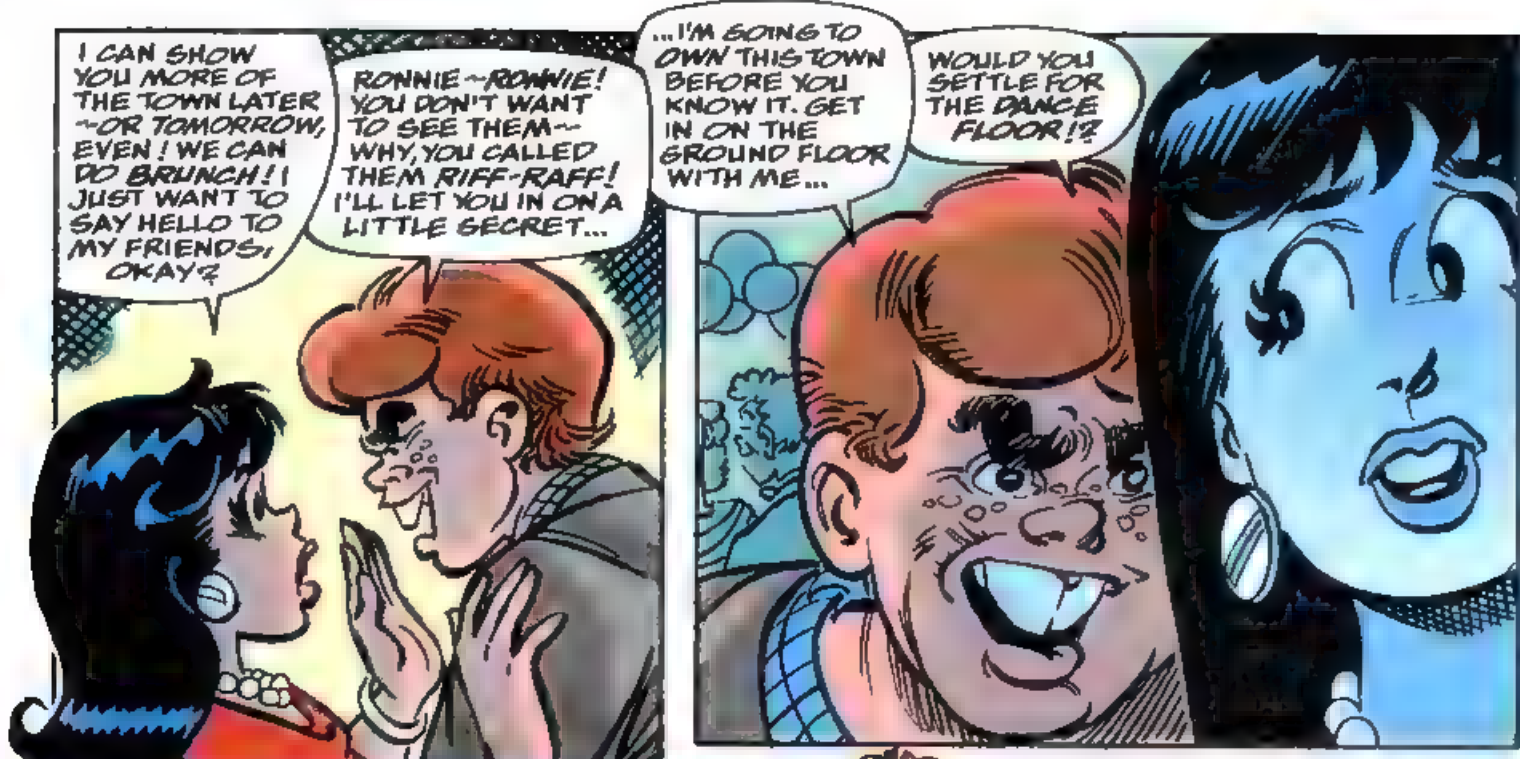
POP!
ANOTHER
ROUND!

SURE! AFTER
YOU SQUARE
YOUR TAB WITH
ME, JUG-
HEAD!









I CAN SHOW YOU MORE OF THE TOWN LATER ~OR TOMORROW, EVEN! WE CAN DO BRUNCH!! I JUST WANT TO SAY HELLO TO MY FRIENDS, OKAY?

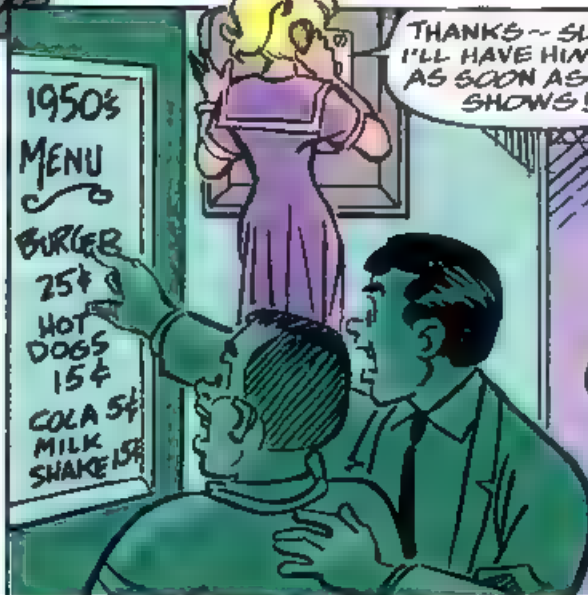
RONNIE~RONNIE! YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THEM~ WHY, YOU CALLED THEM RIFF-RAFF! I'LL LET YOU IN ON A LITTLE SECRET...

...I'M GOING TO OWN THIS TOWN BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. GET IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR WITH ME...

WOULD YOU SETTLE FOR THE DANCE FLOOR!?



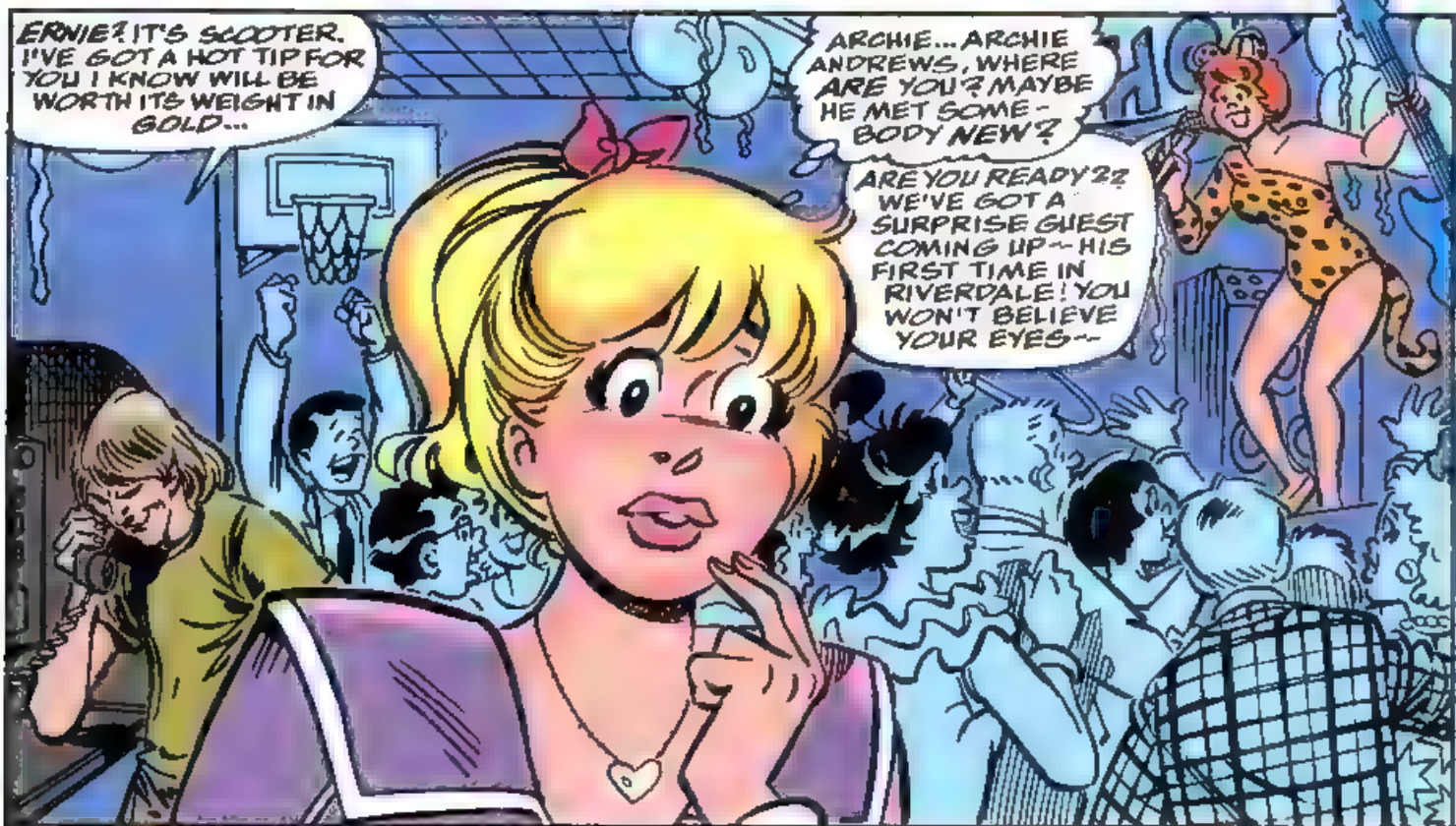
WHAT'S THAT, MRS. ANDREWS? ARCHIE LEFT FOR THE DANCE AWHILE AGO?



THANKS~ SURE, I'LL HAVE HIM CALL AS SOON AS HE SHOWS!

BYE!

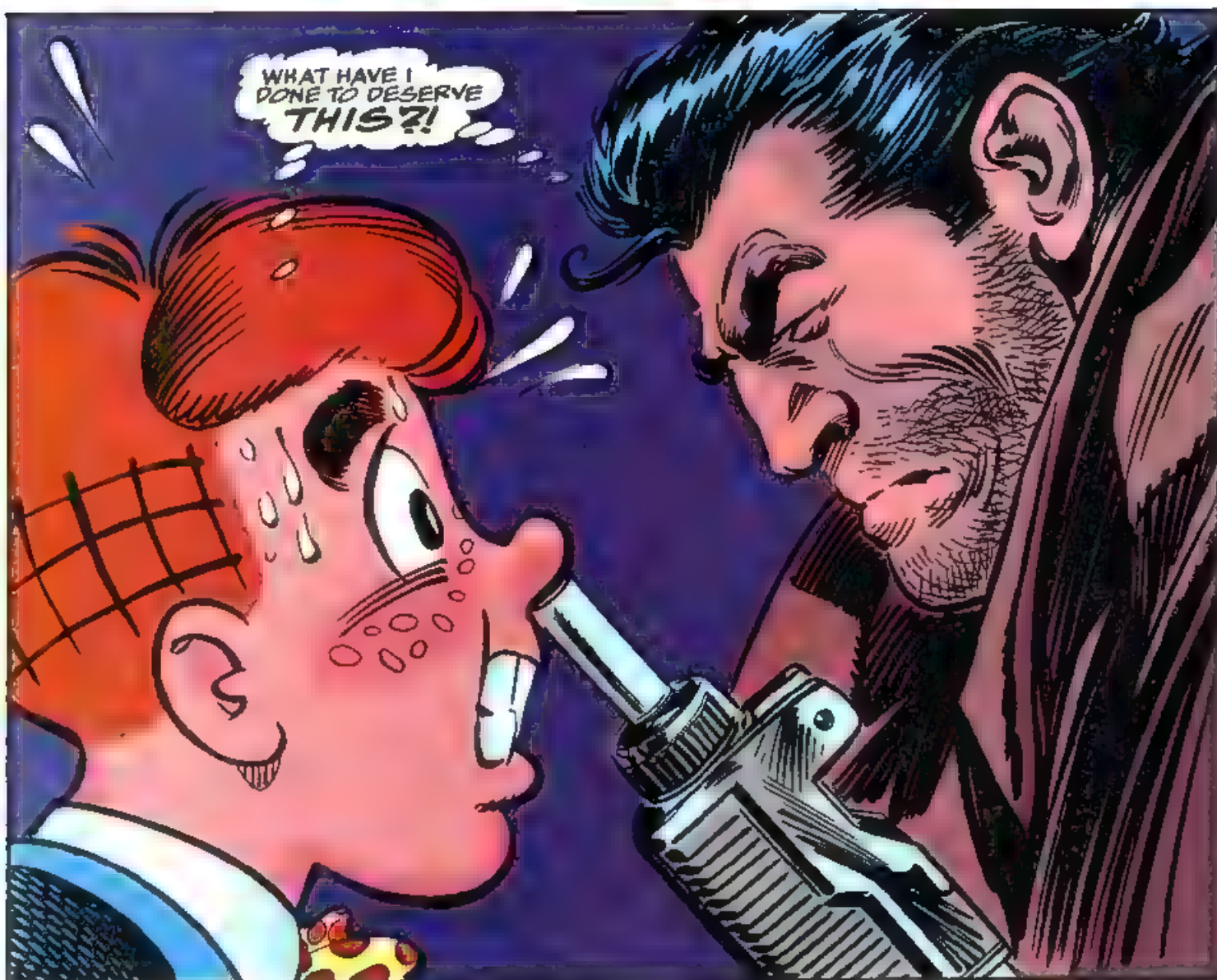
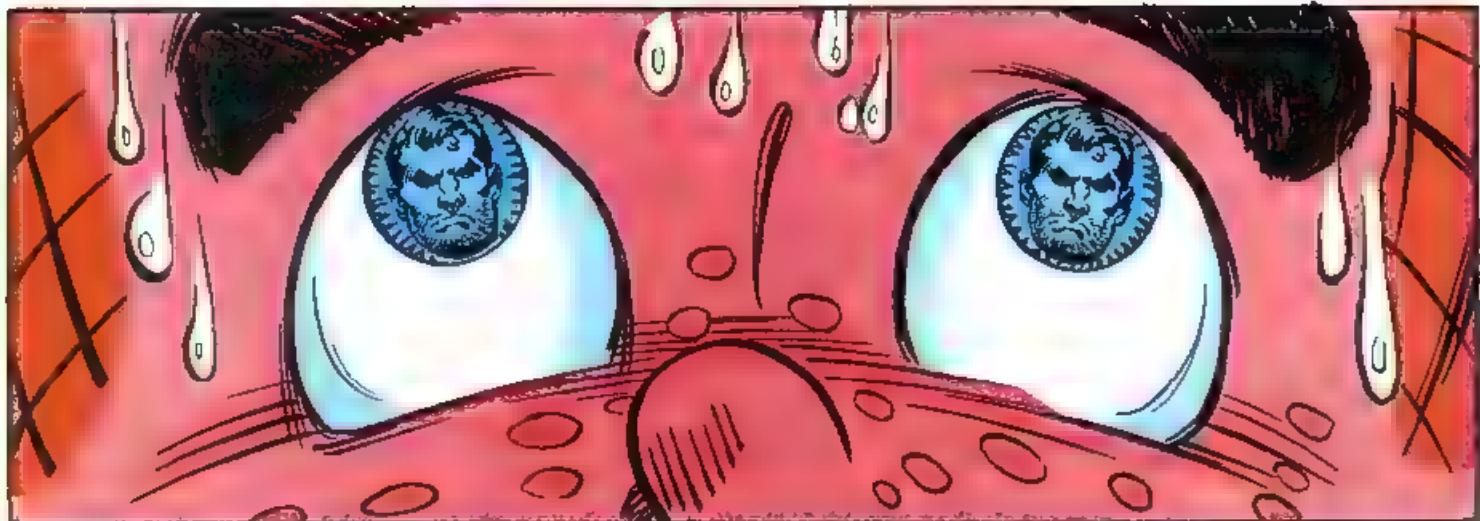
'BOUT TIME!

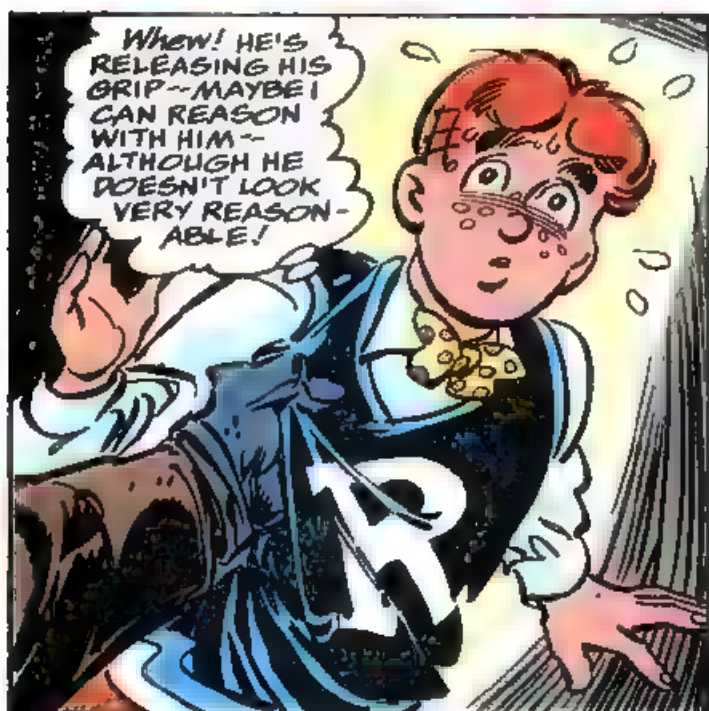
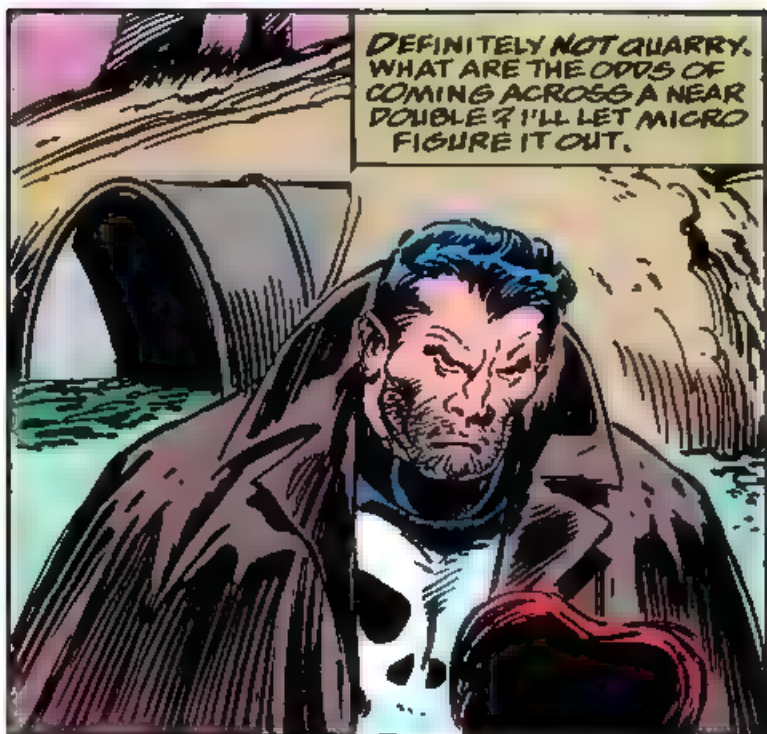
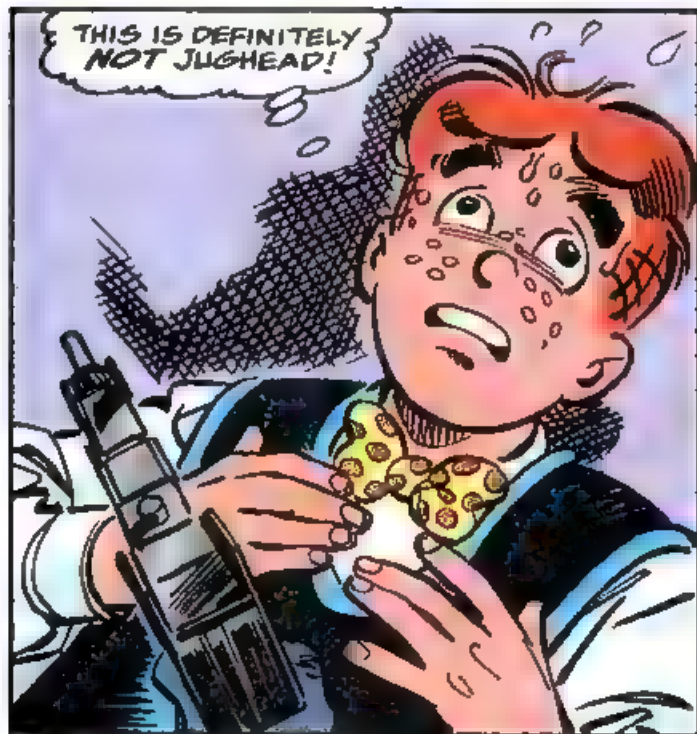


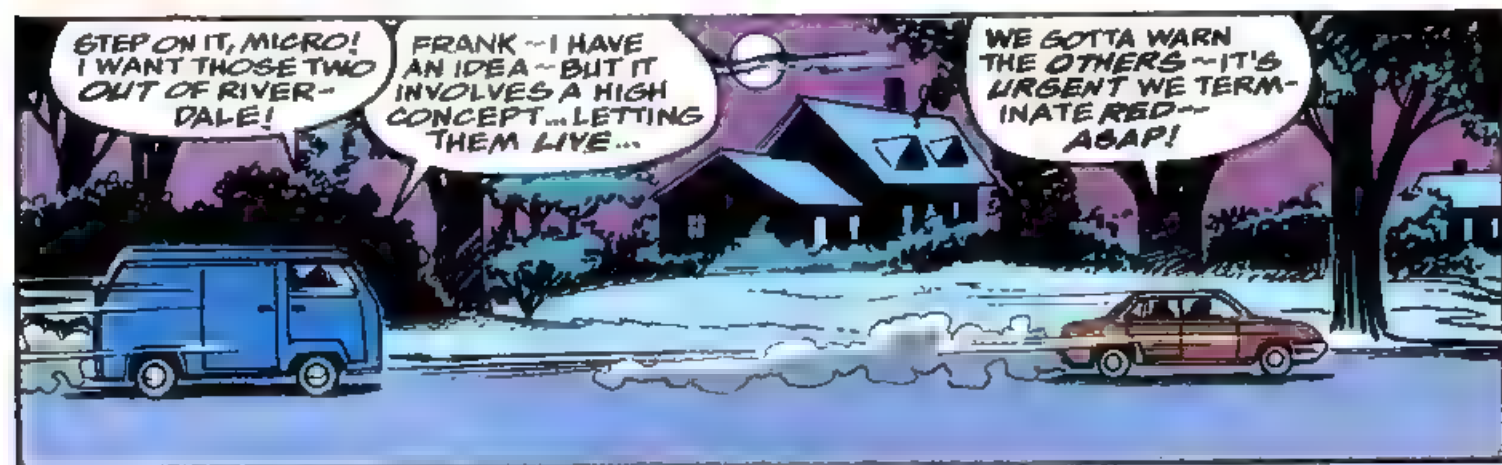
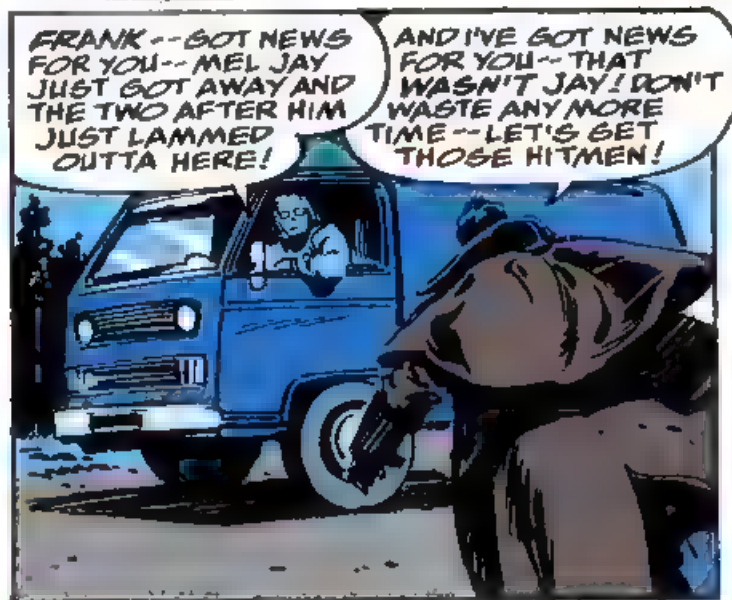
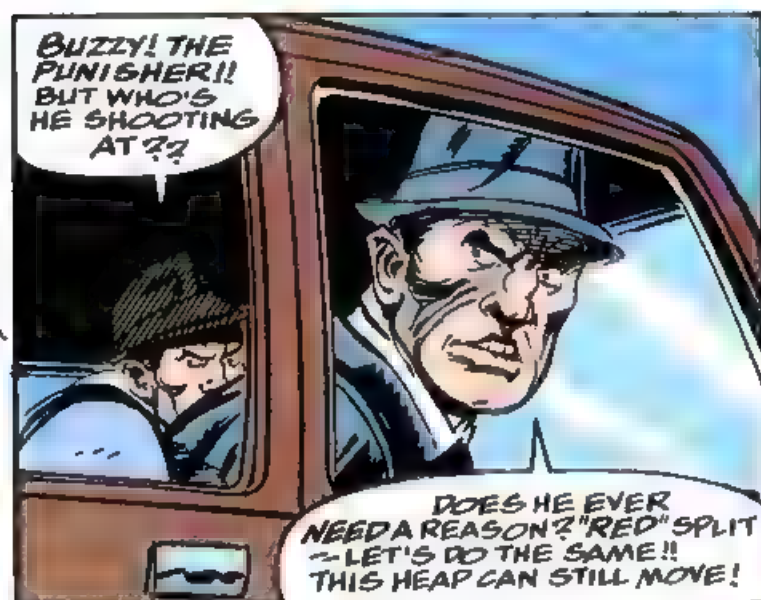
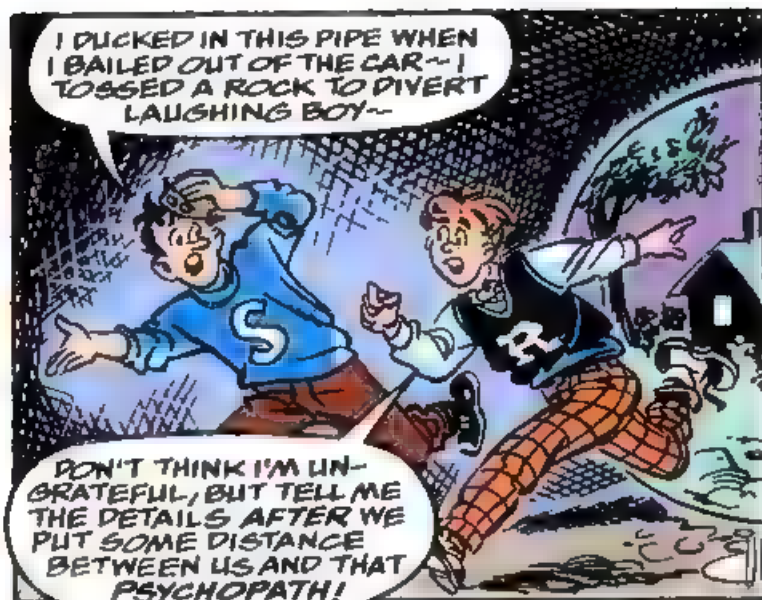
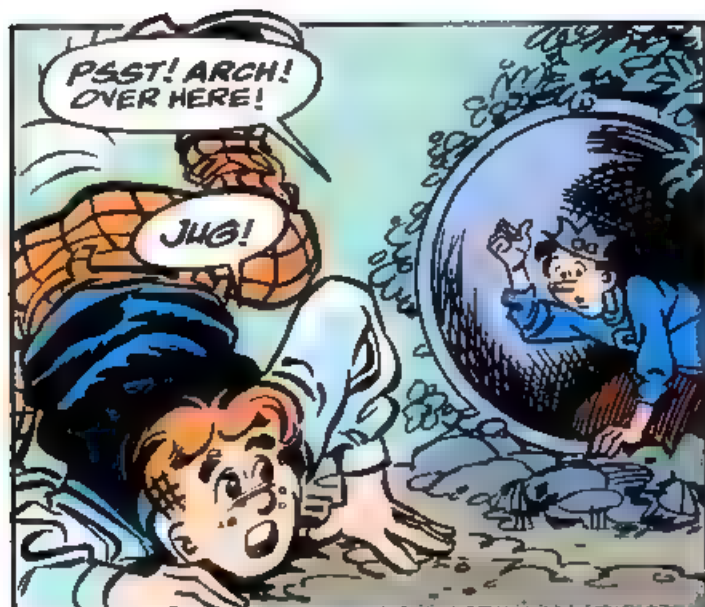
ERNIE? IT'S SCOOTER. I'VE GOT A HOT TIP FOR YOU I KNOW WILL BE WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD...

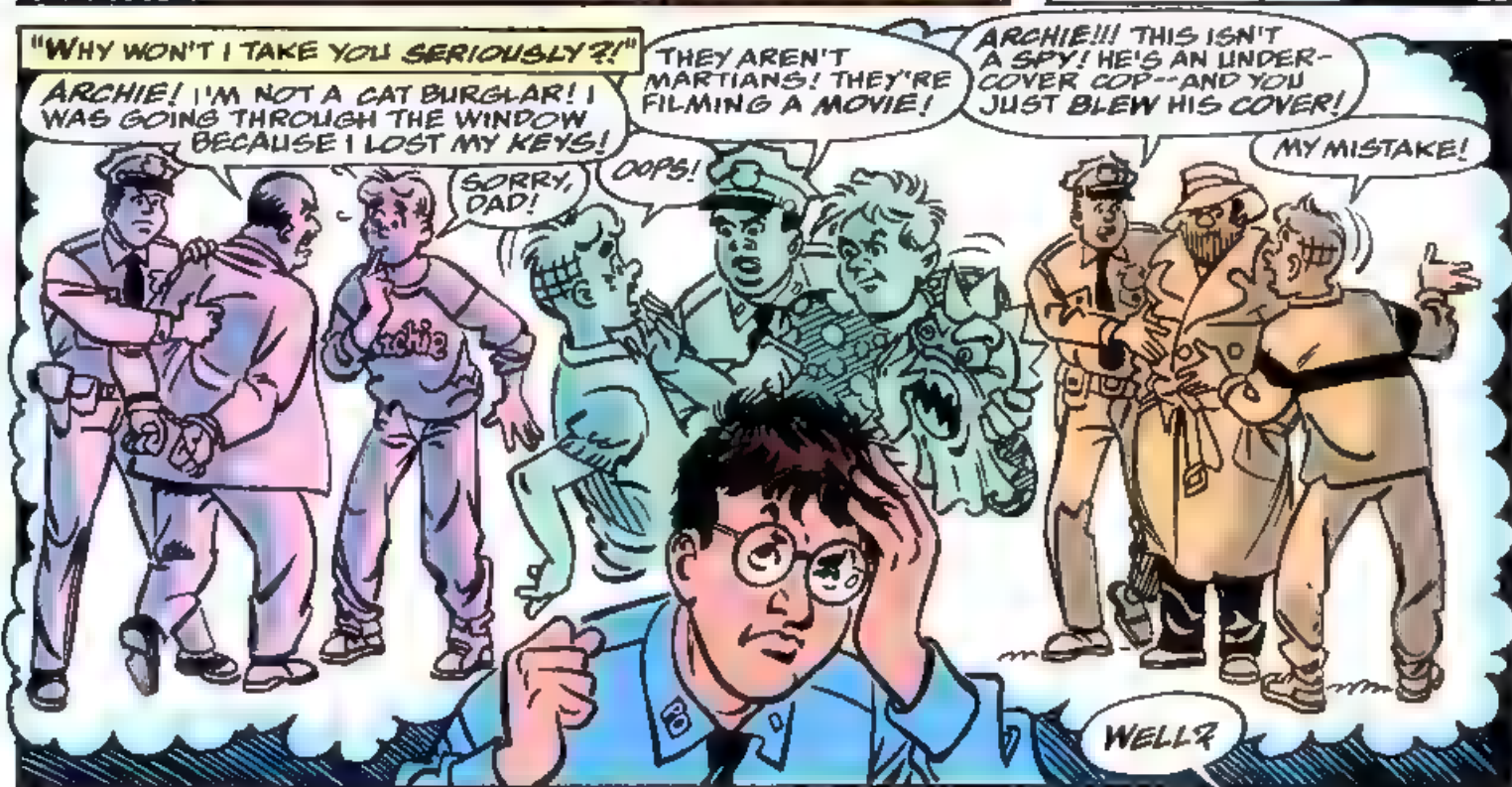
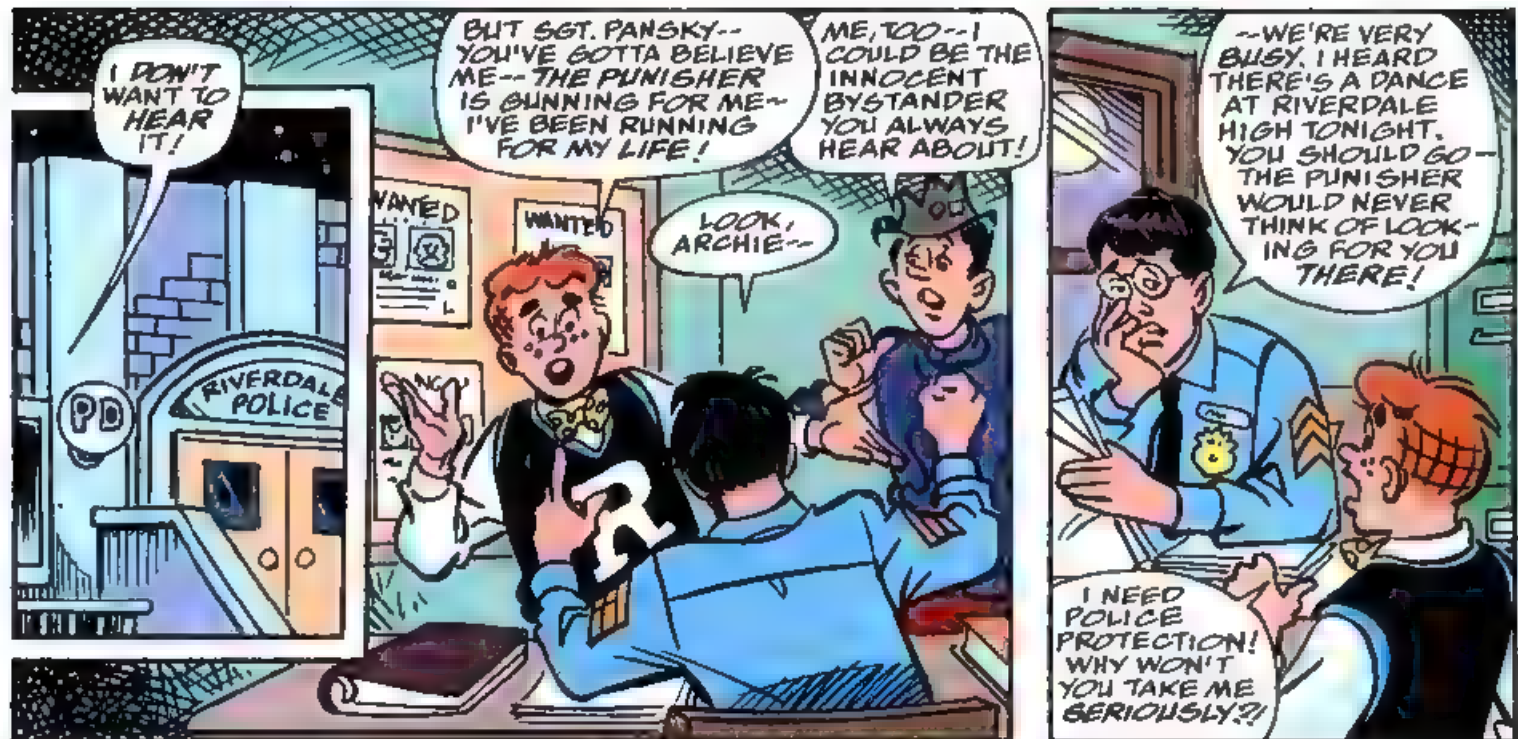
ARCHIE... ARCHIE ANDREWS, WHERE ARE YOU? MAYBE HE MET SOME-BODY NEW?

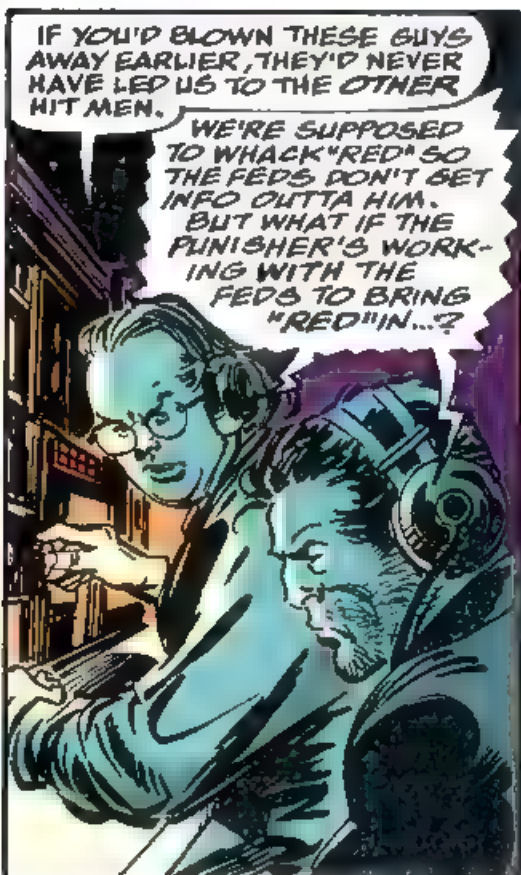
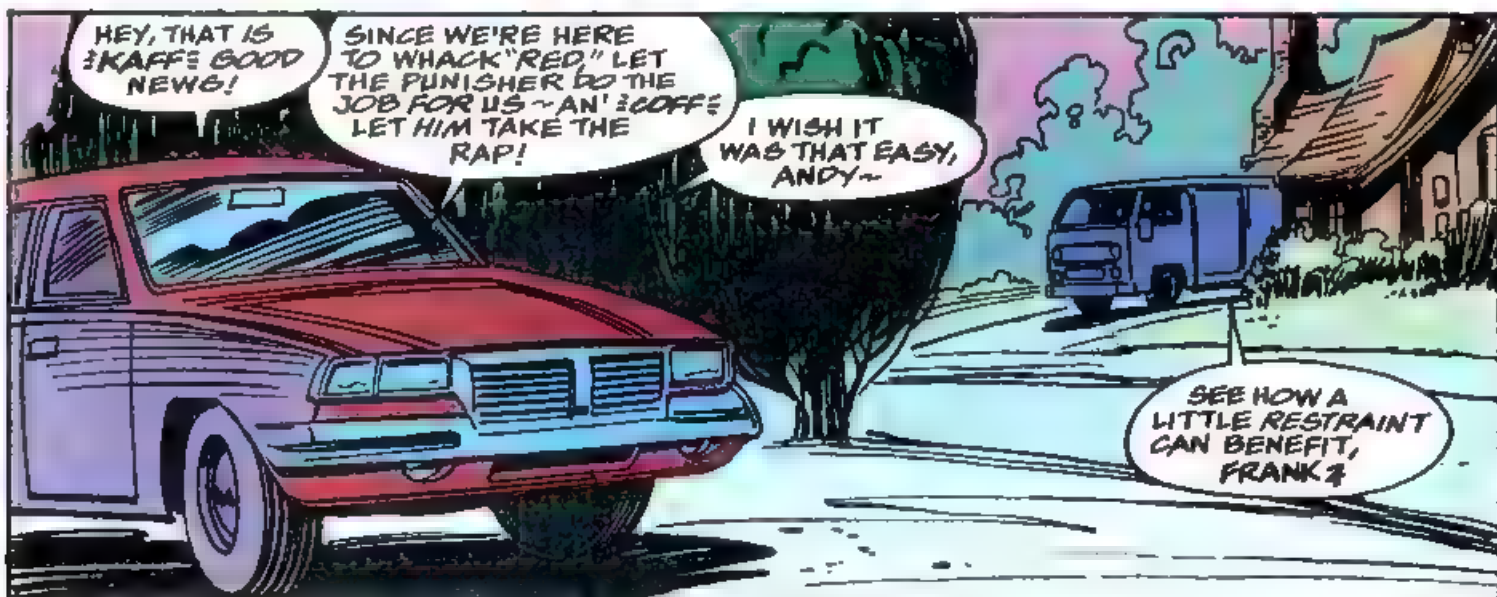
ARE YOU READY?? WE'VE GOT A SURPRISE GUEST COMING UP~ HIS FIRST TIME IN RIVERDALE! YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES~

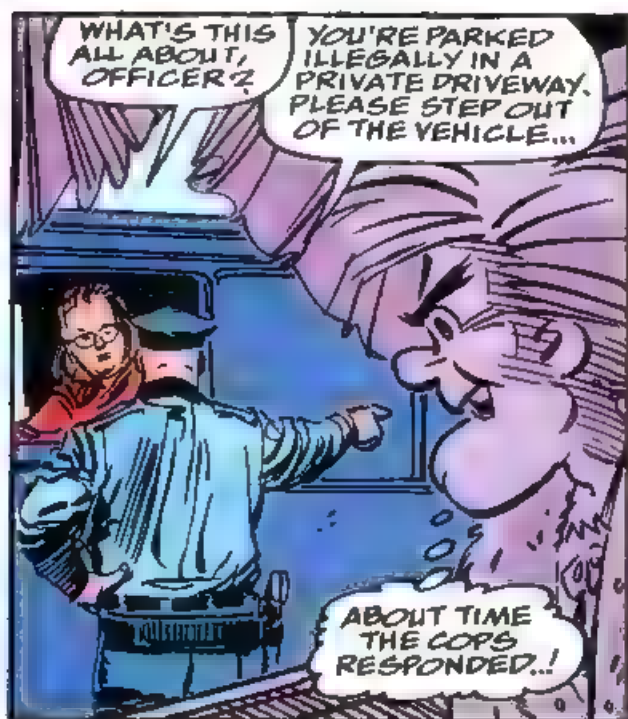
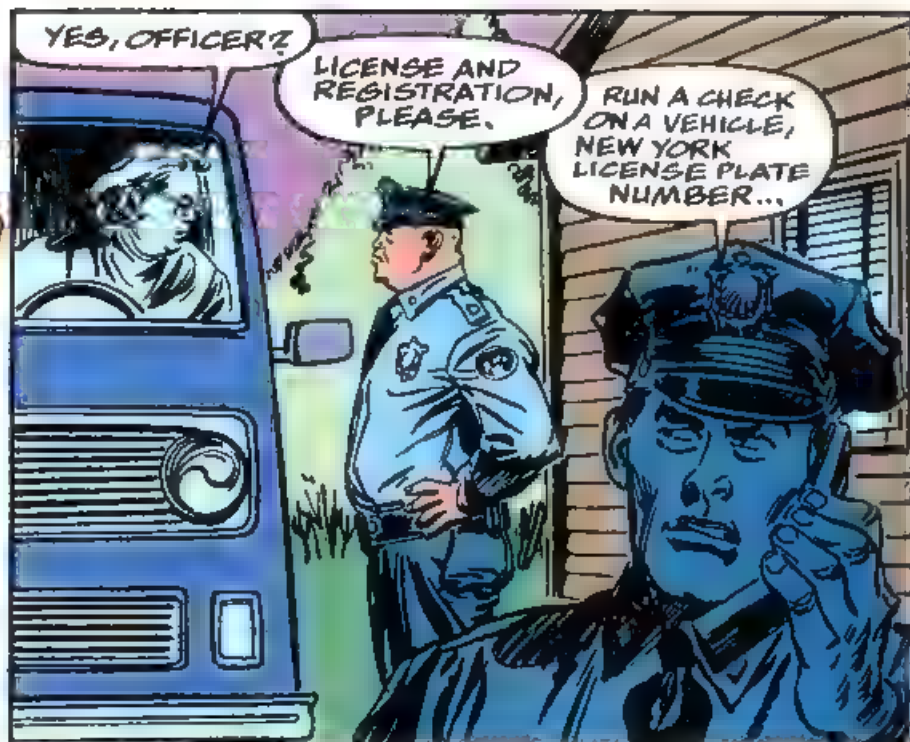


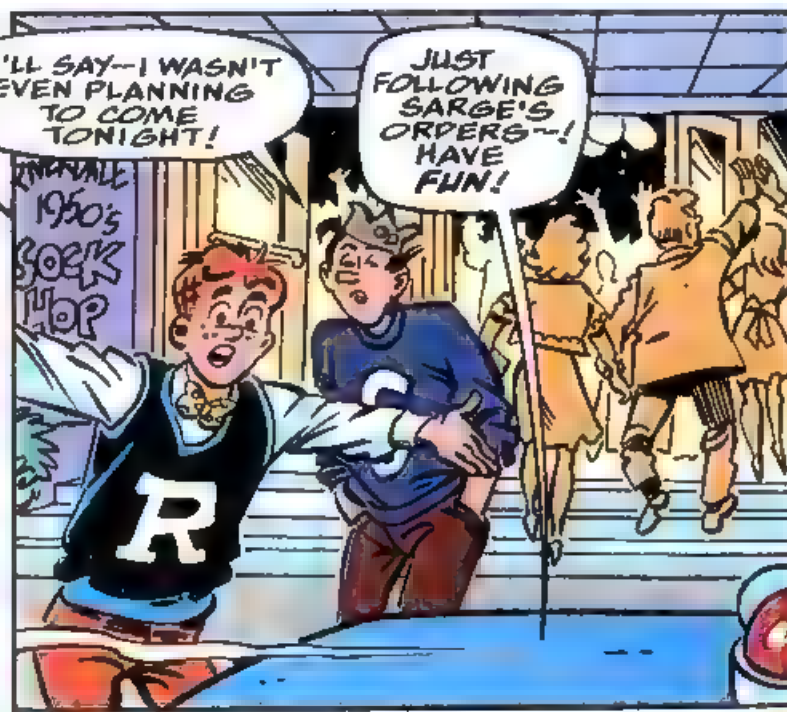
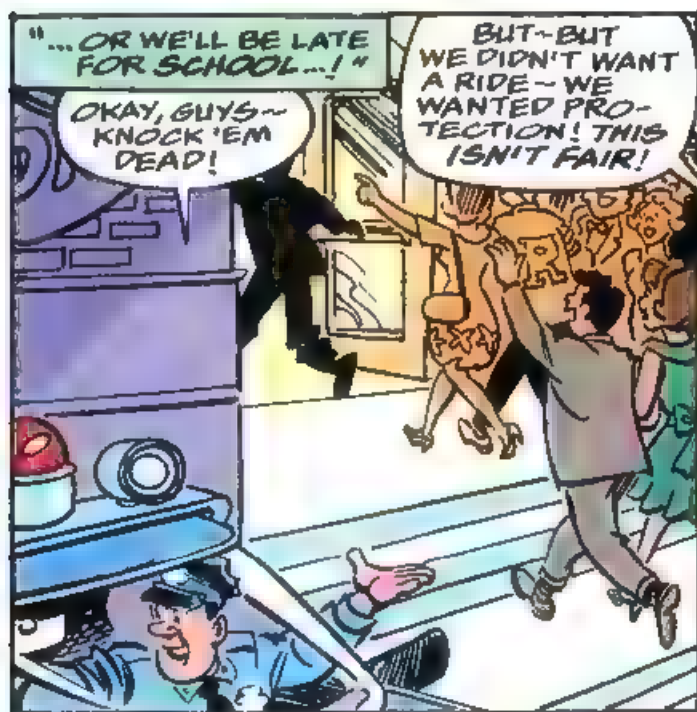
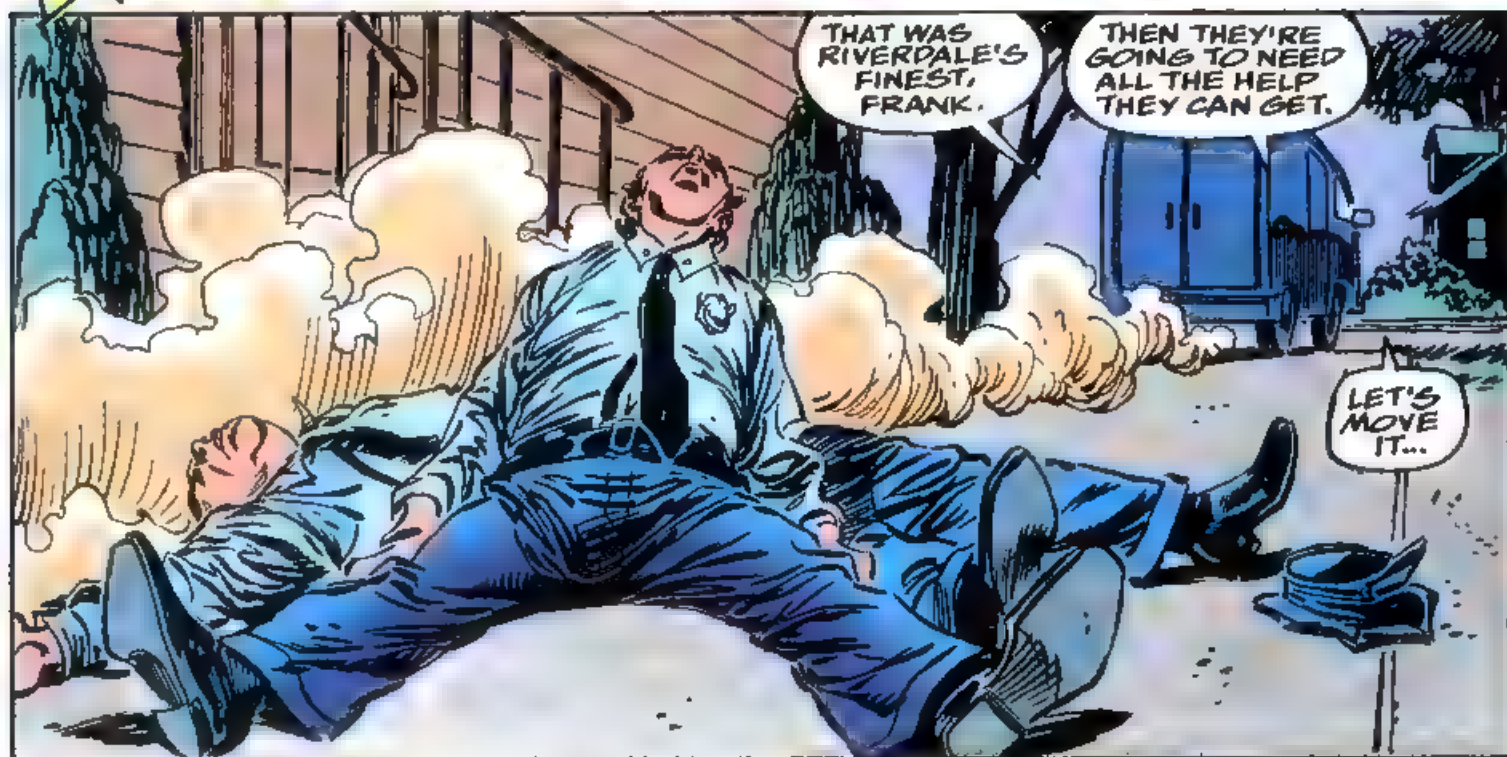
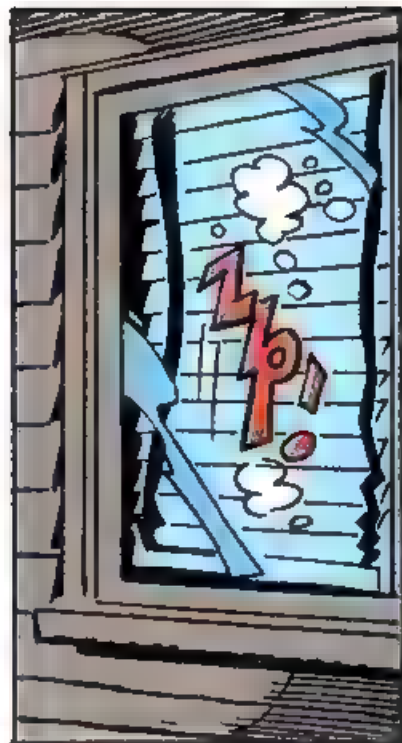


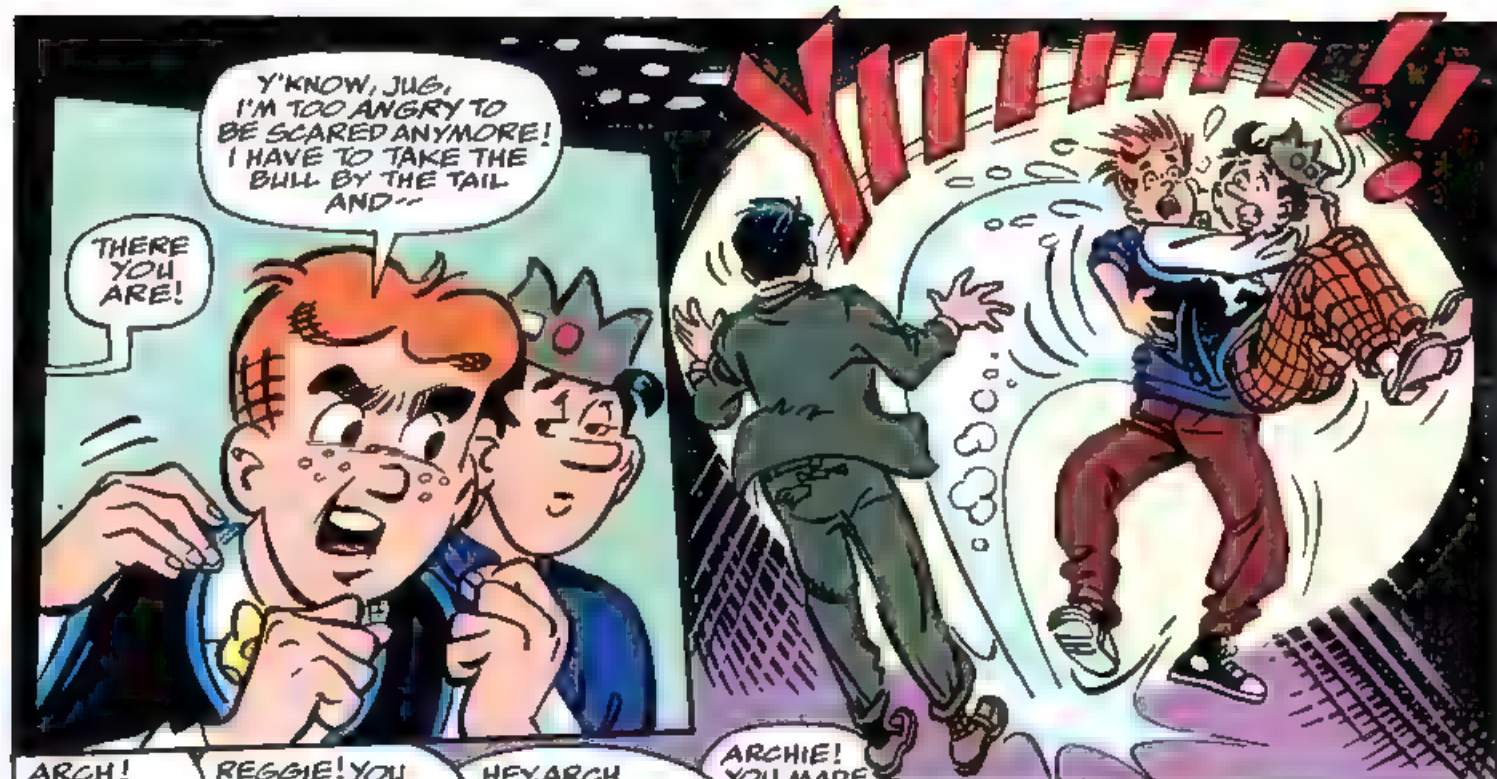












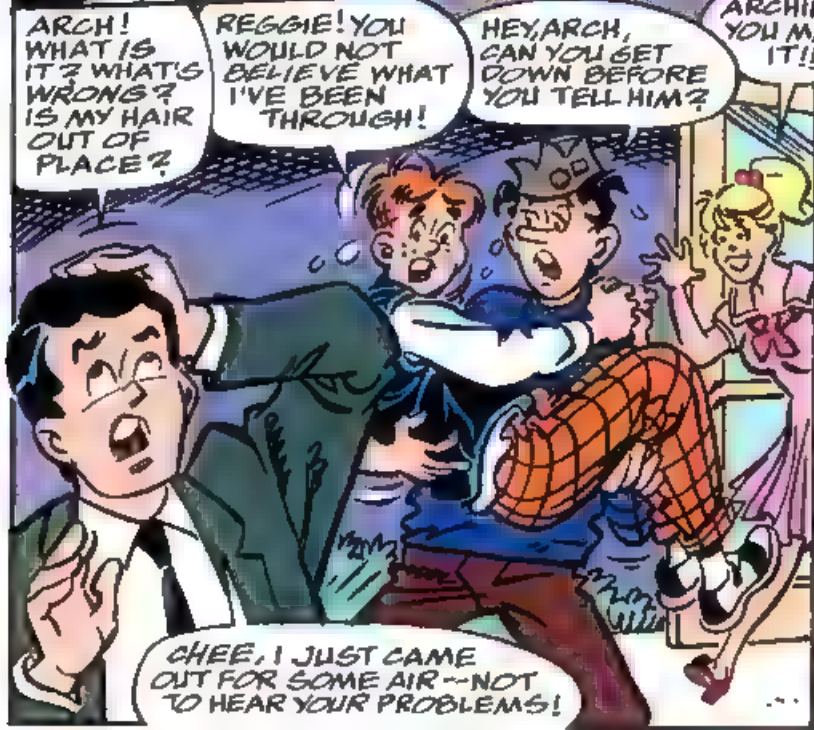
Y'KNOW, JUG,
I'M TOO ANGRY TO
BE SCARED ANYMORE!
I HAVE TO TAKE THE
BULL BY THE TAIL
AND--

THERE
YOU
ARE!

ARCHIE!
YOU MADE
IT!!

I'M WARNING
YOU BOTH--I'M
DANGEROUS
TO BE AROUND!

WHO ARE YOU--
JAMES DEAN?

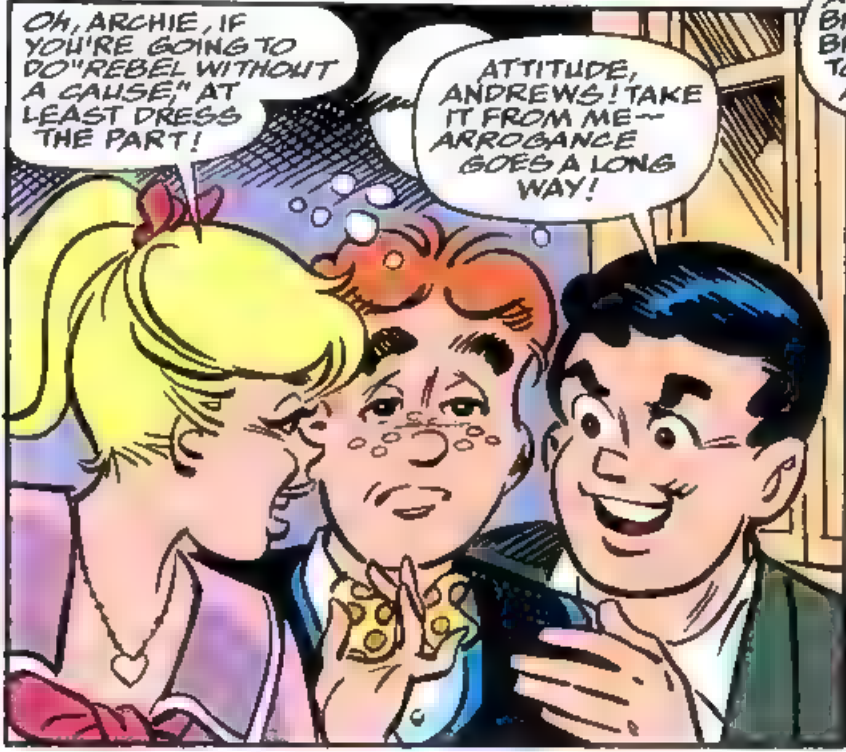
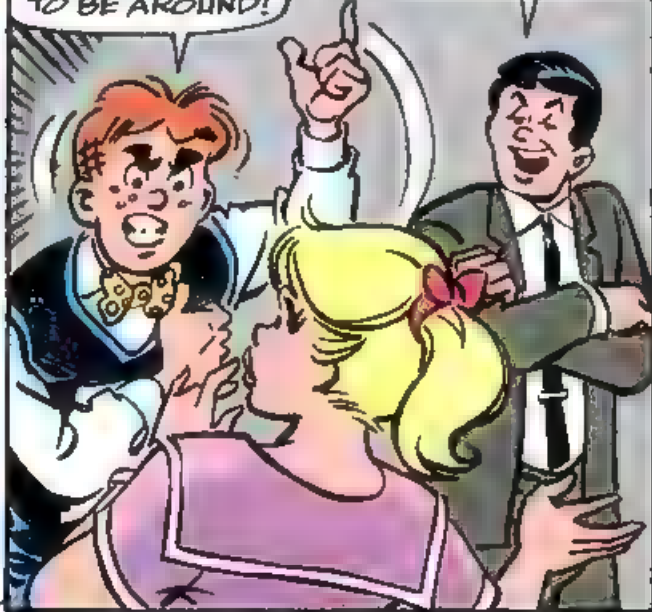


ARCH!
WHAT IS
IT? WHAT'S
WRONG?
IS MY HAIR
OUT OF
PLACE?

REGGIE! YOU
WOULD NOT
BELIEVE WHAT
I'VE BEEN
THROUGH!

HEY, ARCH,
CAN YOU GET
DOWN BEFORE
YOU TELL HIM?

CHEE, I JUST CAME
OUT FOR SOME AIR--NOT
TO HEAR YOUR PROBLEMS!

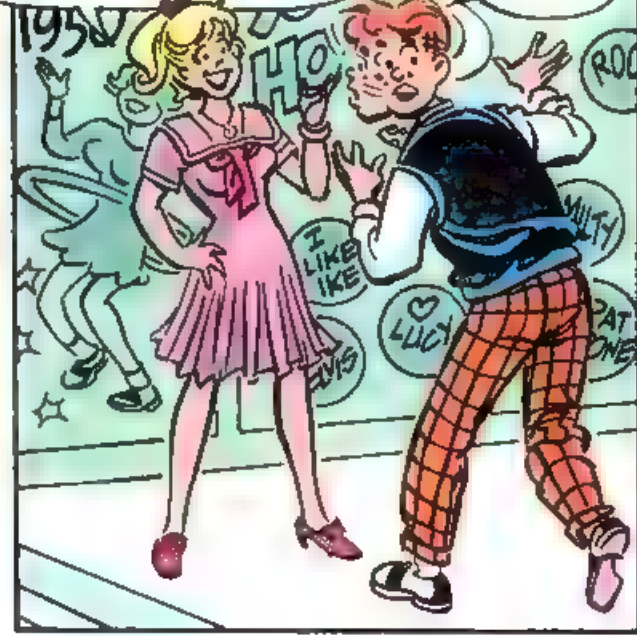


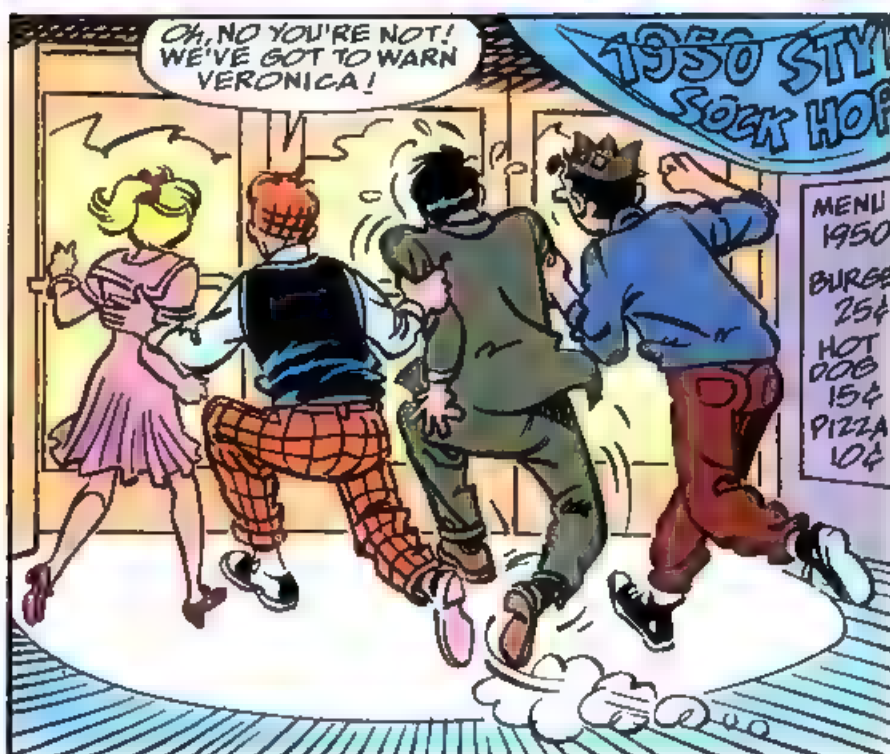
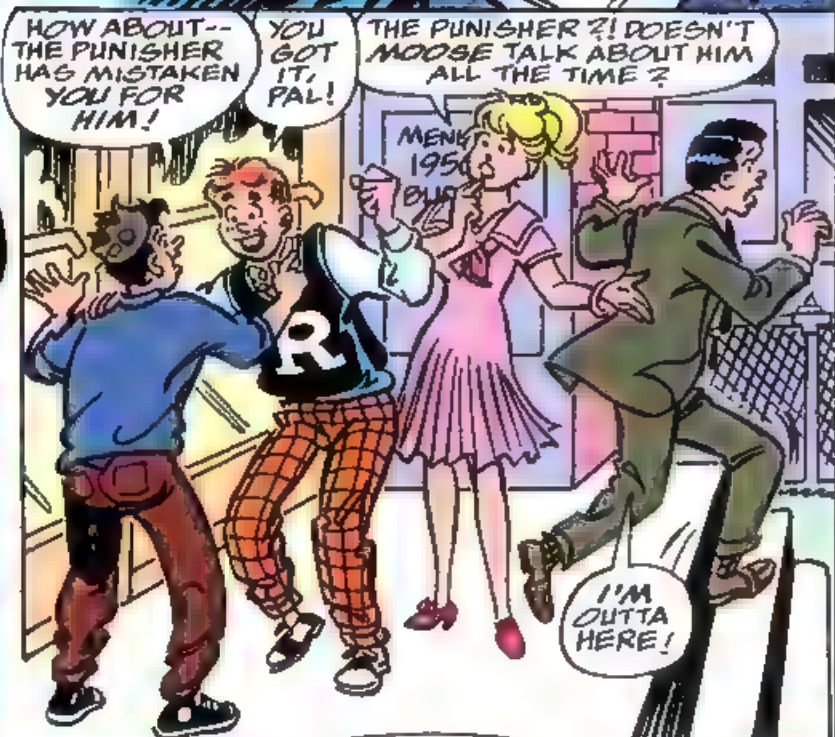
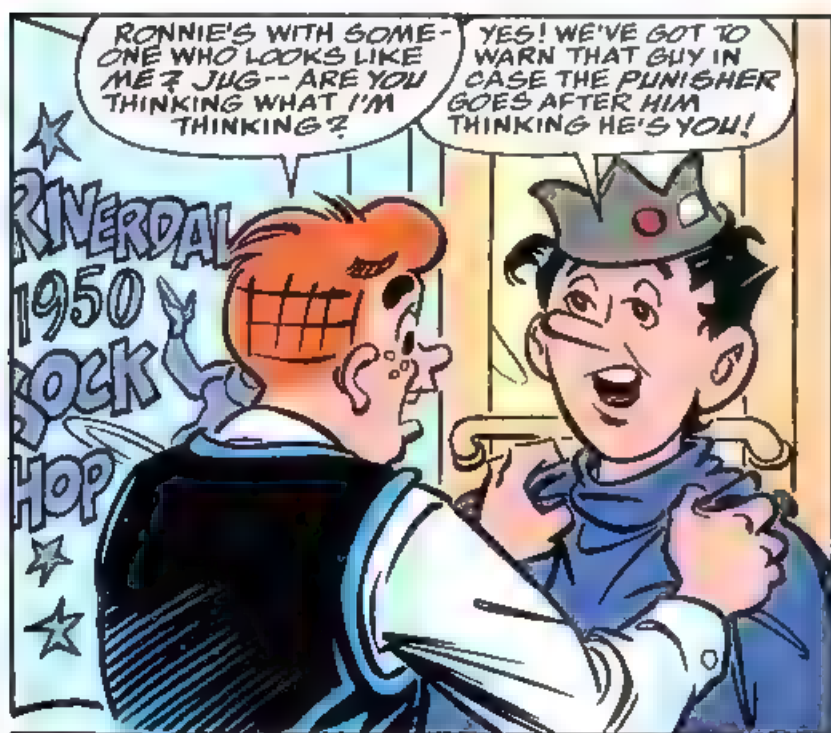
OH, ARCHIE, IF
YOU'RE GOING TO
DO "REBEL WITHOUT
A CAUSE" AT
LEAST DRESS
THE PART!

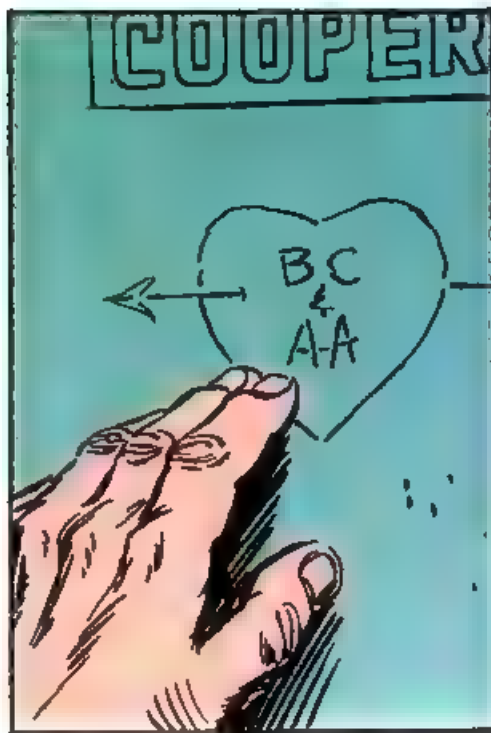
ATTITUDE,
ANDREWS! TAKE
IT FROM ME--
ARROGANCE
GOES A LONG
WAY!

AW, I KNOW YOUR EGO IS
BRUISED BECAUSE RONNIE
BROUGHT ANOTHER DATE
TO THE DANCE. YOU NEED
A LITTLE SYMPATHY...

WILL SOME-
ONE PLEASE
LISTEN TO--
--ME?







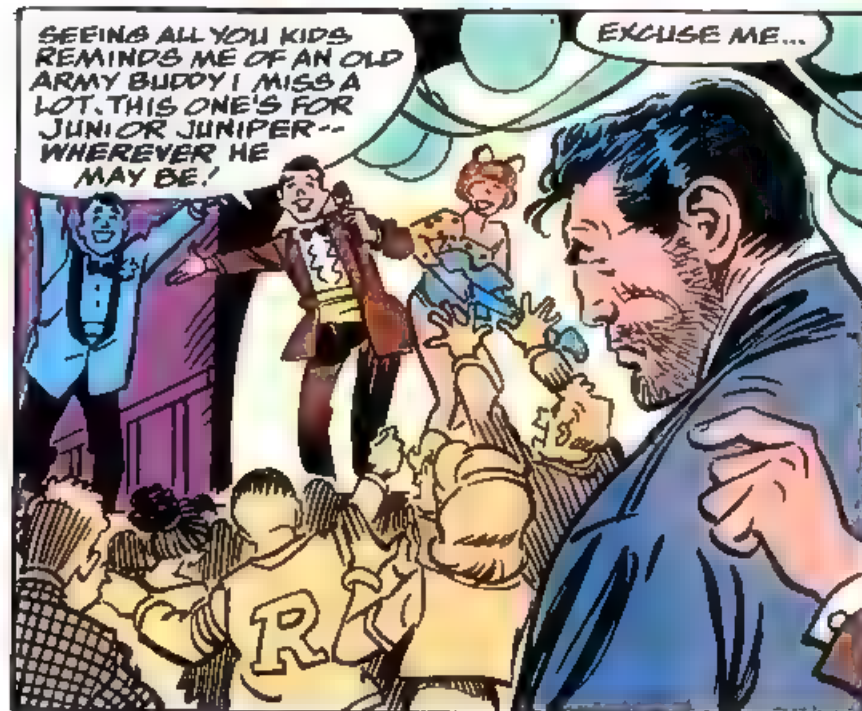


THAT KID'S A MENACE! YOU! WHAT'S HOLDING THINGS UP? YOU SHOULD BE SERVING THE FOOD BY NOW!

YESSIR...



...COMIN' RIGHT OUT!



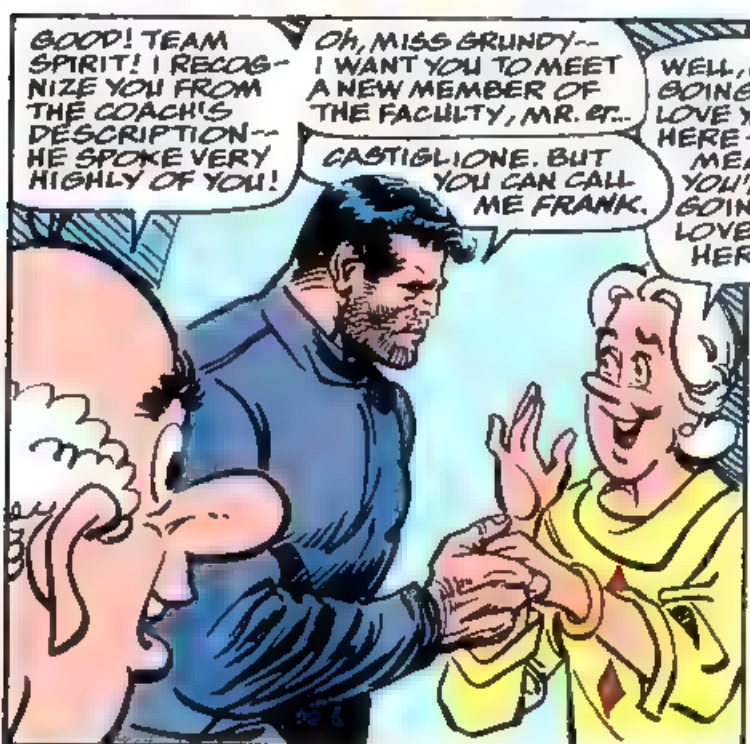
SEEING ALL YOU KIDS REMINDS ME OF AN OLD ARMY BUDDY I MISS A LOT. THIS ONE'S FOR JUNIOR JUNIPER-- WHEREVER HE MAY BE!

EXCUSE ME...



FLUTESNOOT, HERE! YOU MUST BE THE NEW PHYS ED TEACHER COACH KLEATS HIRED! HE SAID YOU'D BE HERE!

JUST PUTTING IN MY TIME CHAPERONING.

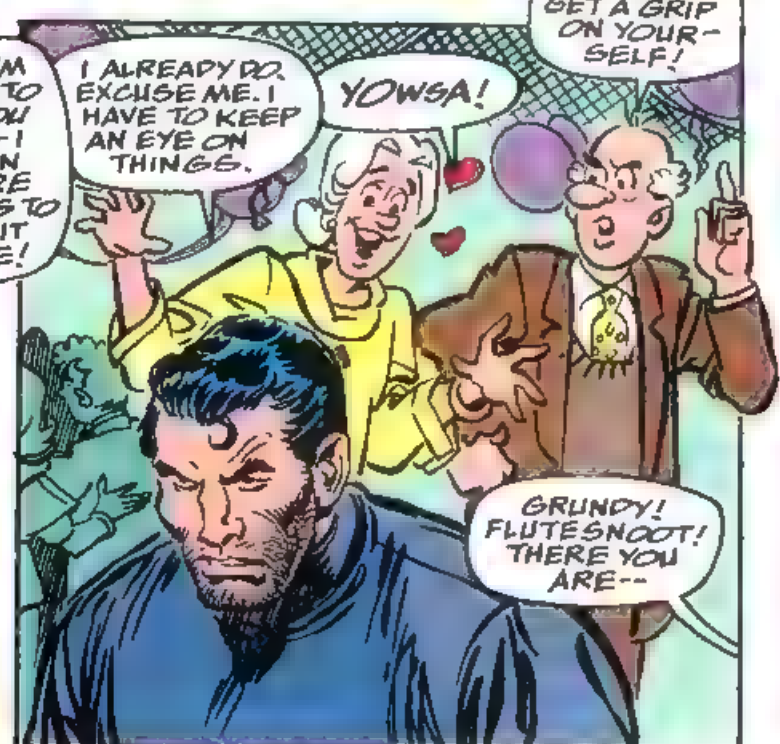


GOOD! TEAM SPIRIT! I RECOGNIZE YOU FROM THE COACH'S DESCRIPTION-- HE SPOKE VERY HIGHLY OF YOU!

OH, MISS GRUNDY-- I WANT YOU TO MEET A NEW MEMBER OF THE FACULTY, MR. ST...

CASTIGLIONE. BUT YOU CAN CALL ME FRANK.

WELL, I'M GOING TO LOVE YOU HERE-- I MEAN YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE IT HERE!

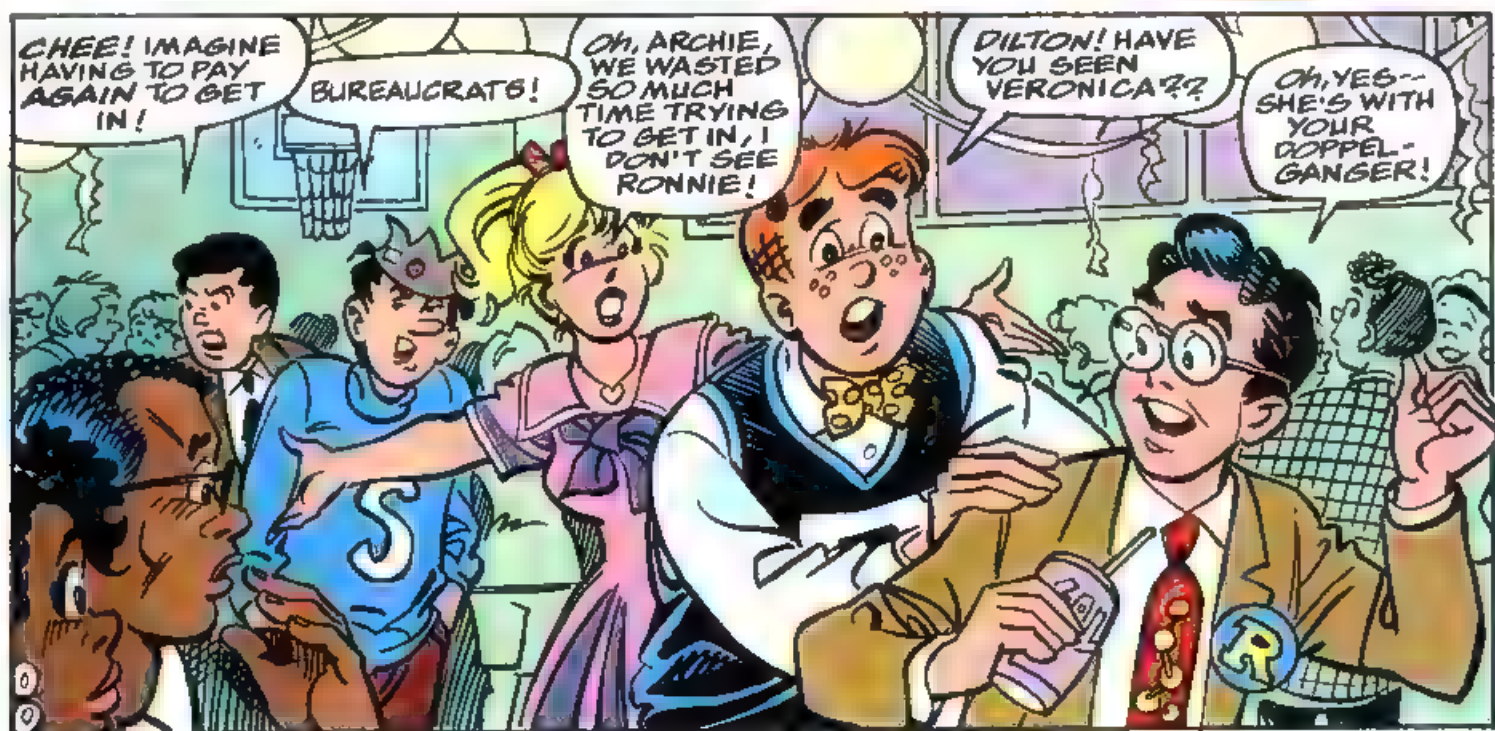
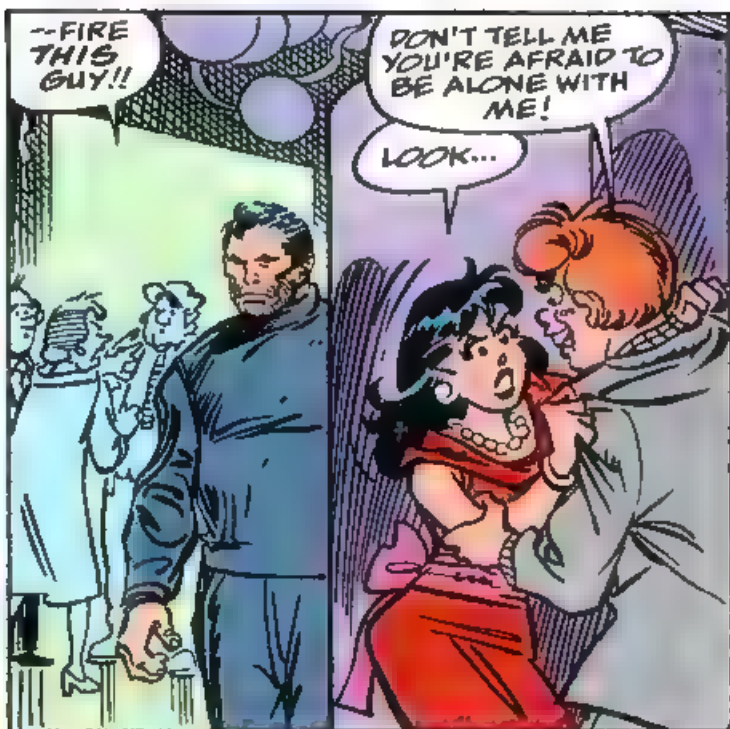
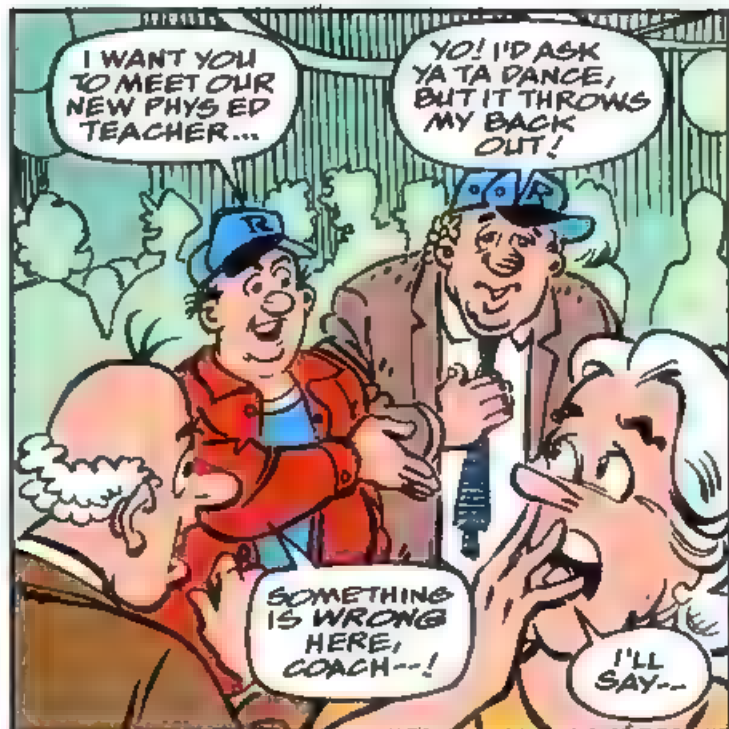


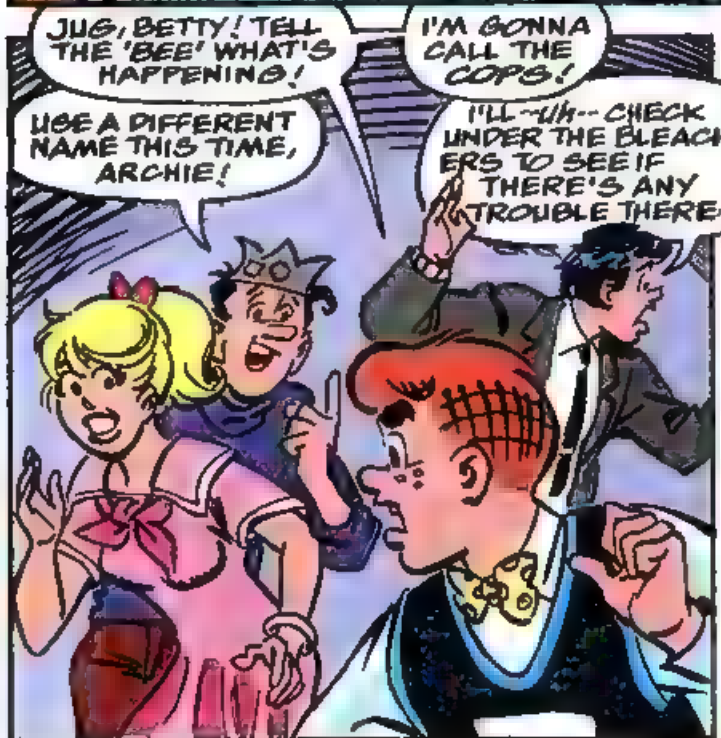
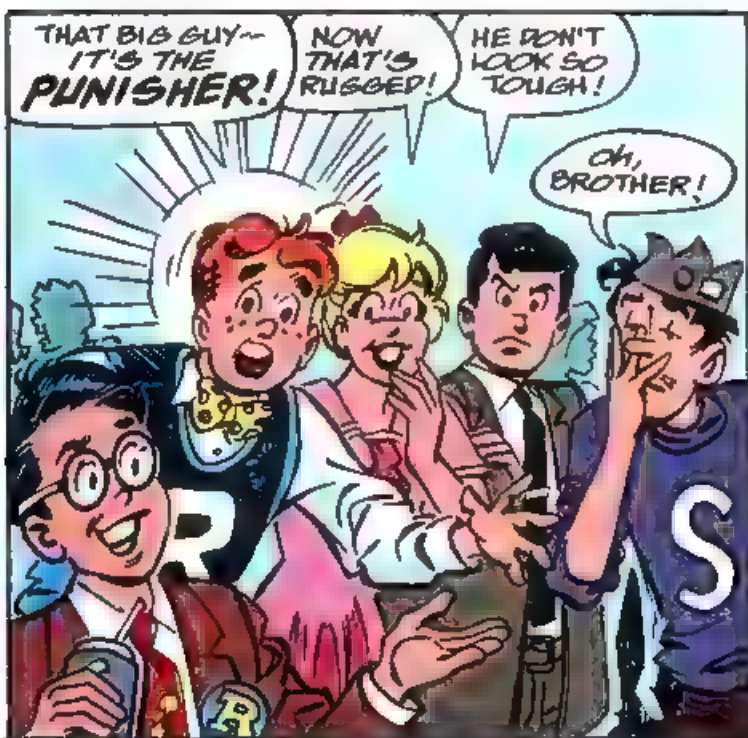
I ALREADY DO. EXCUSE ME. I HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS.

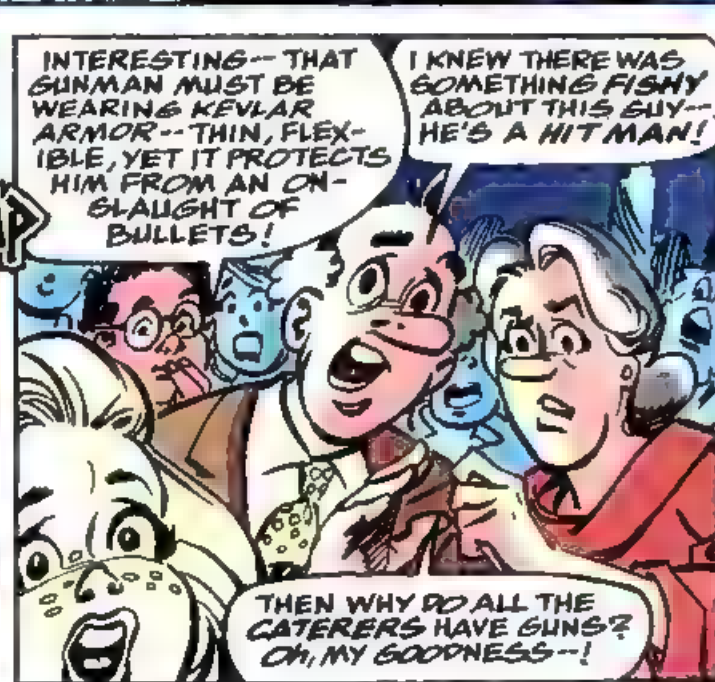
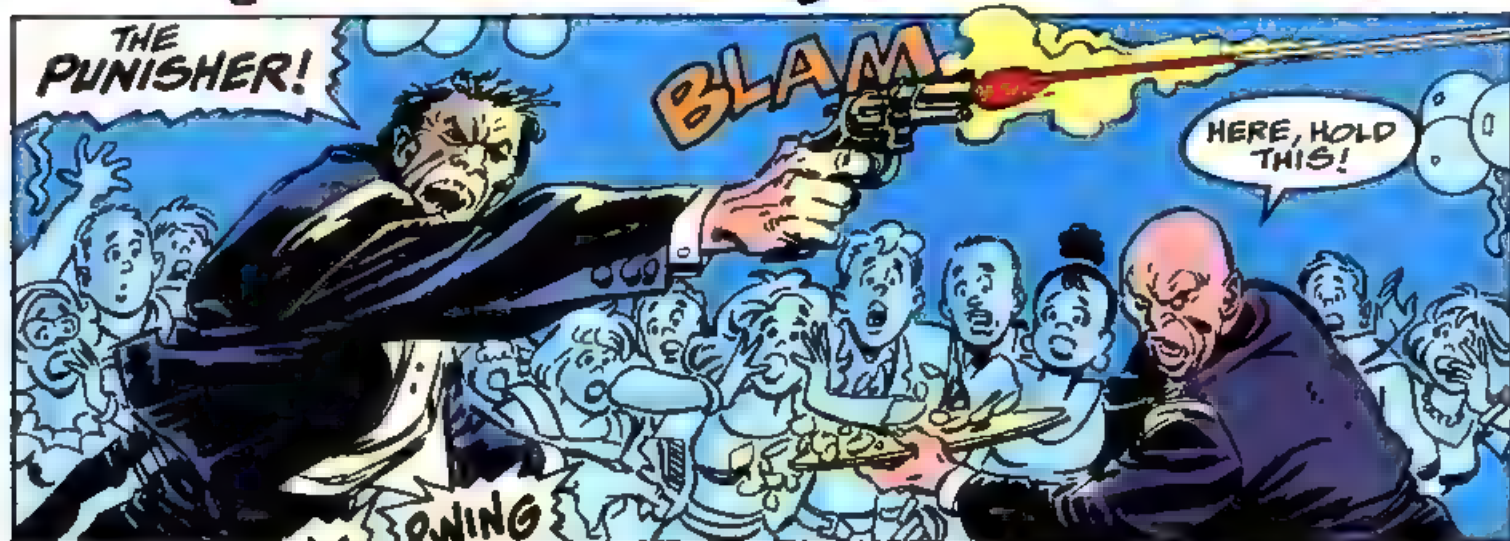
YOWSA!

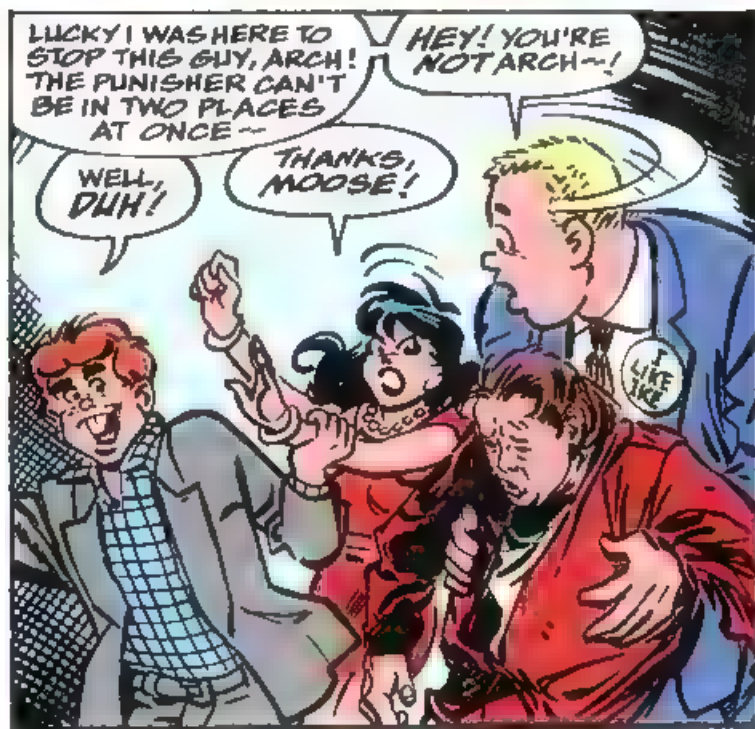
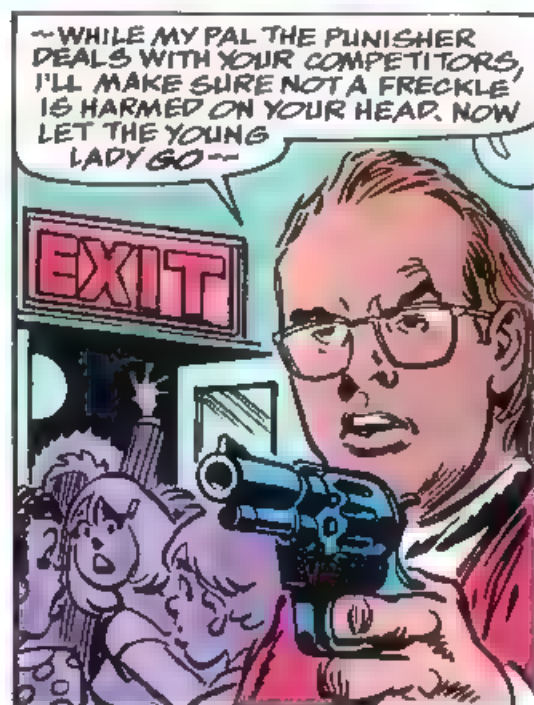
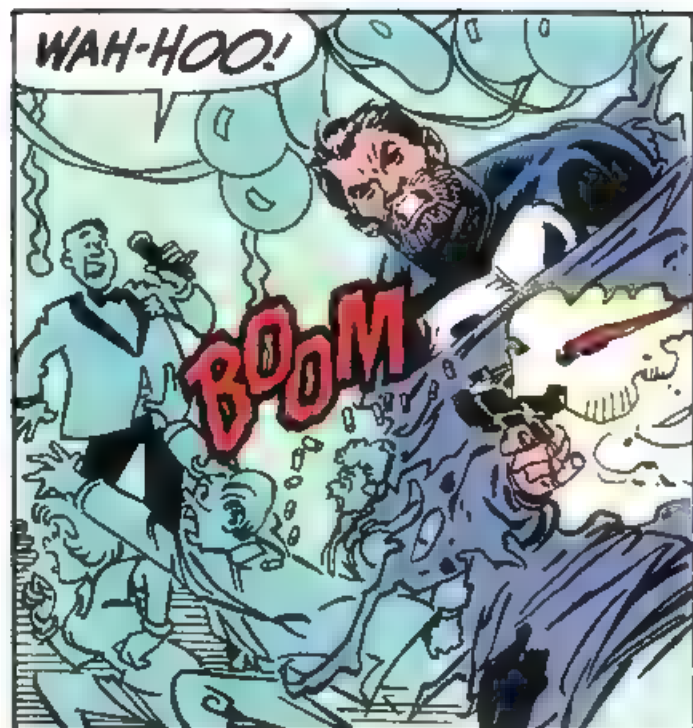
OH, GRUNDY! GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF!

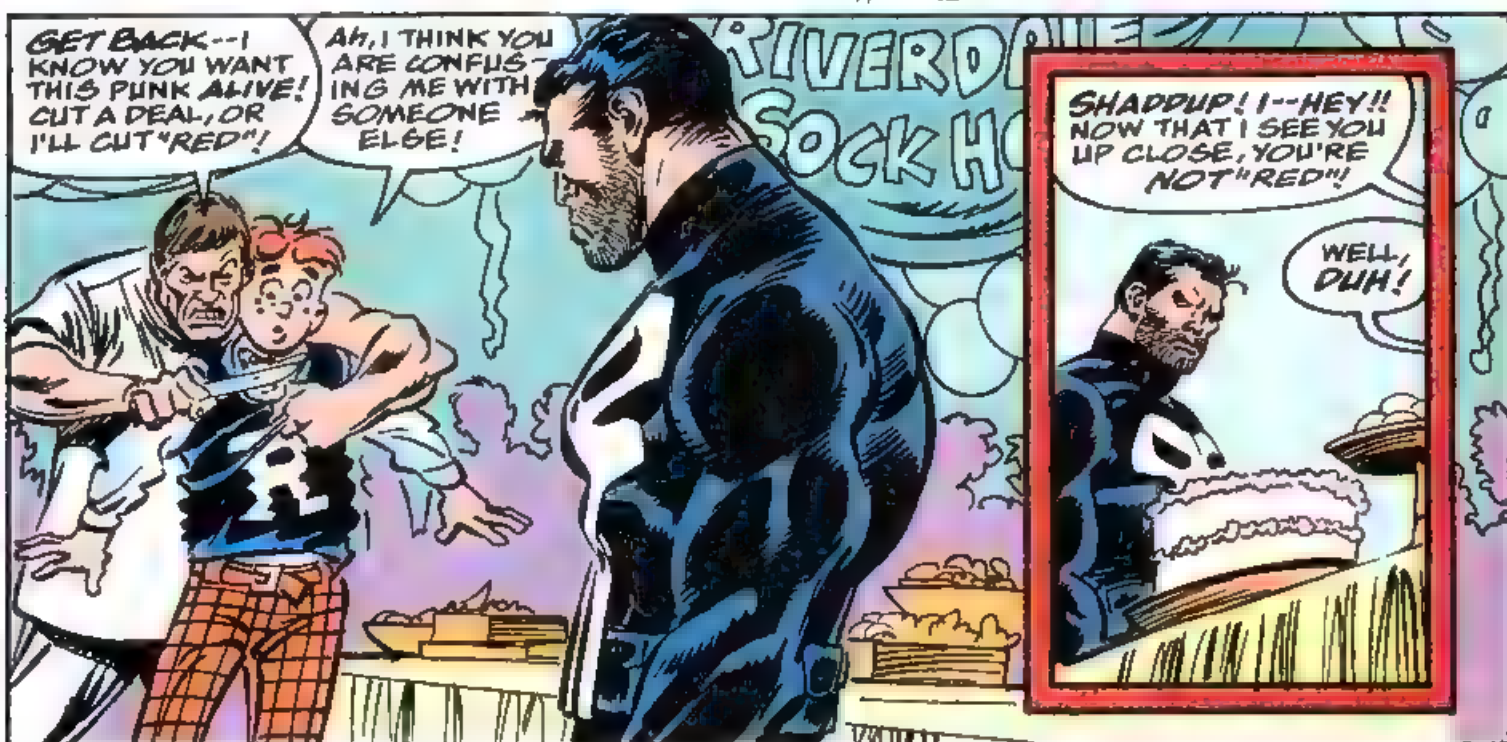
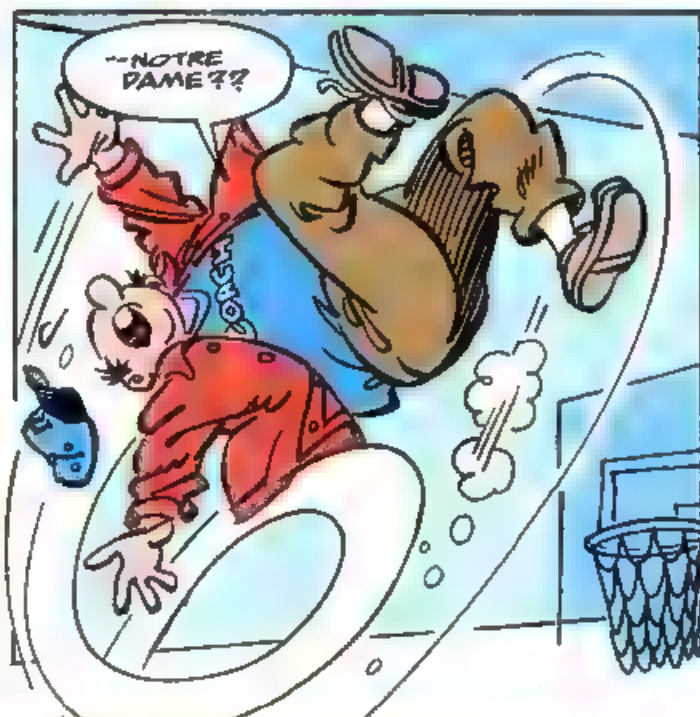
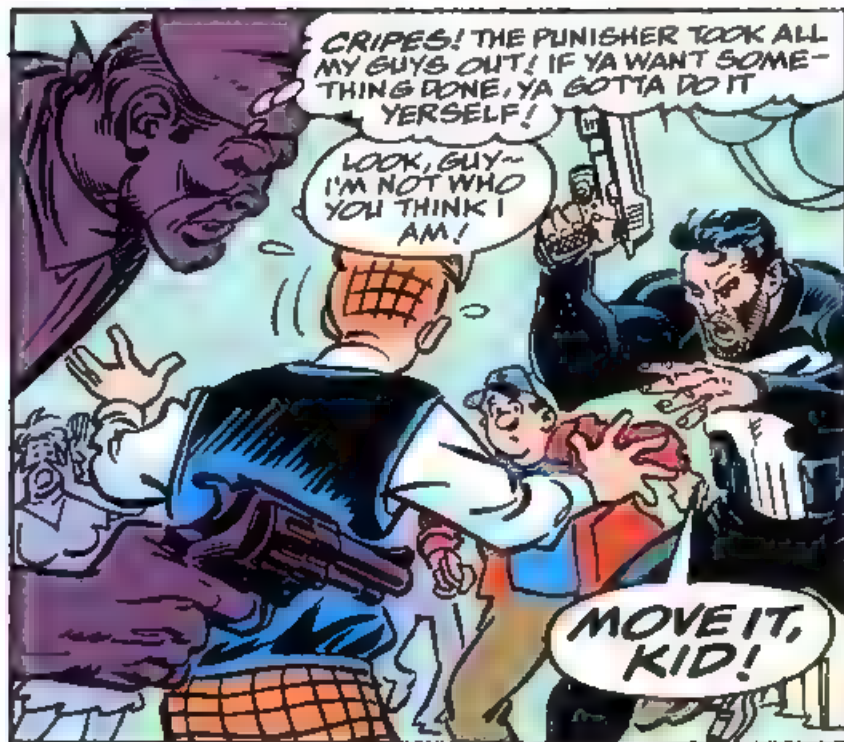
GRUNDY! FLUTESNOOT! THERE YOU ARE--

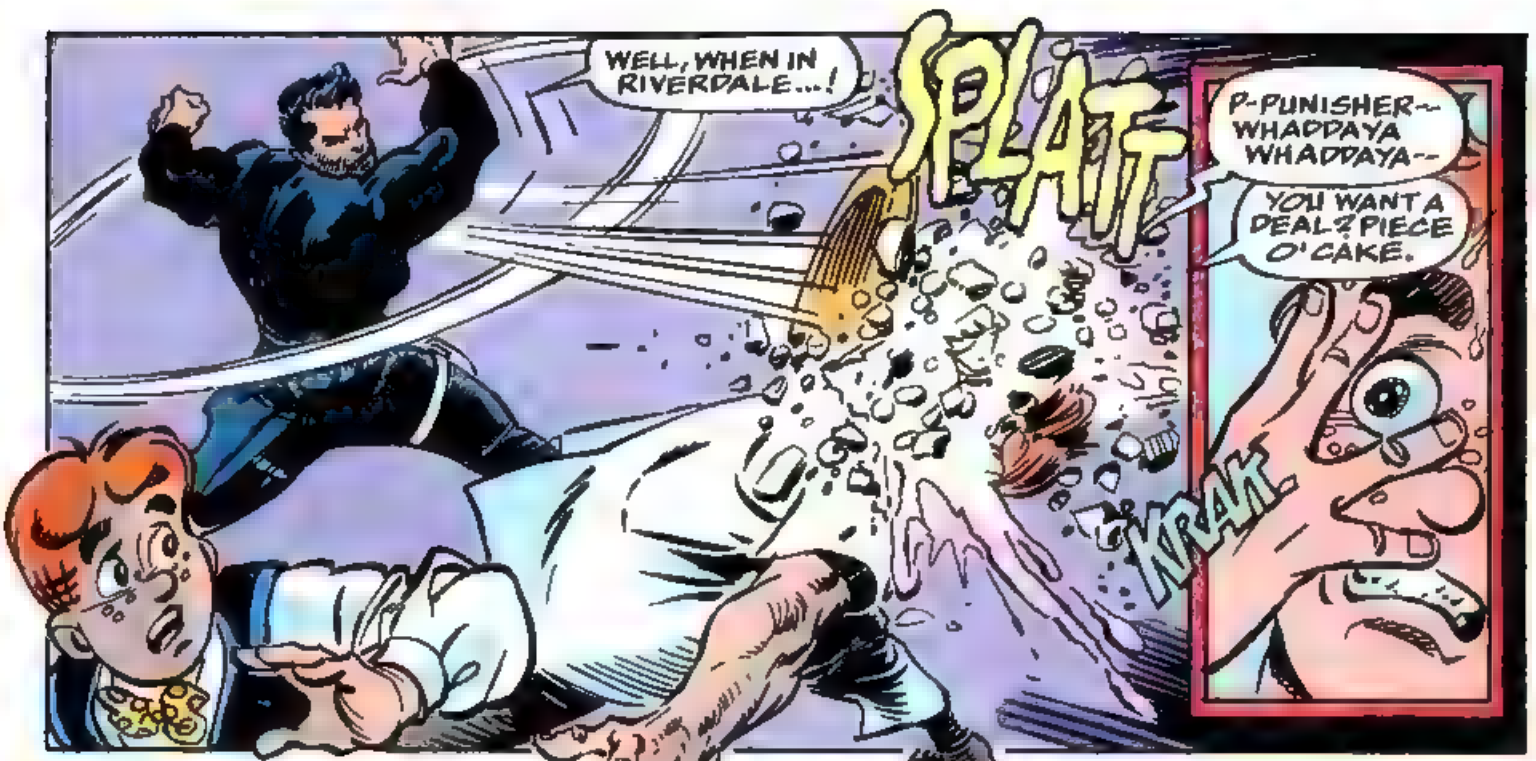












WELL, WHEN IN RIVERDALE...

SPLAT

P-PUNISHER-- WHADDAYA WHADDAYA--
YOU WANT A DEAL? PIECE O' CAKE.

KRAK



I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.

BEST NEWS I'VE HEARD ALL DAY!

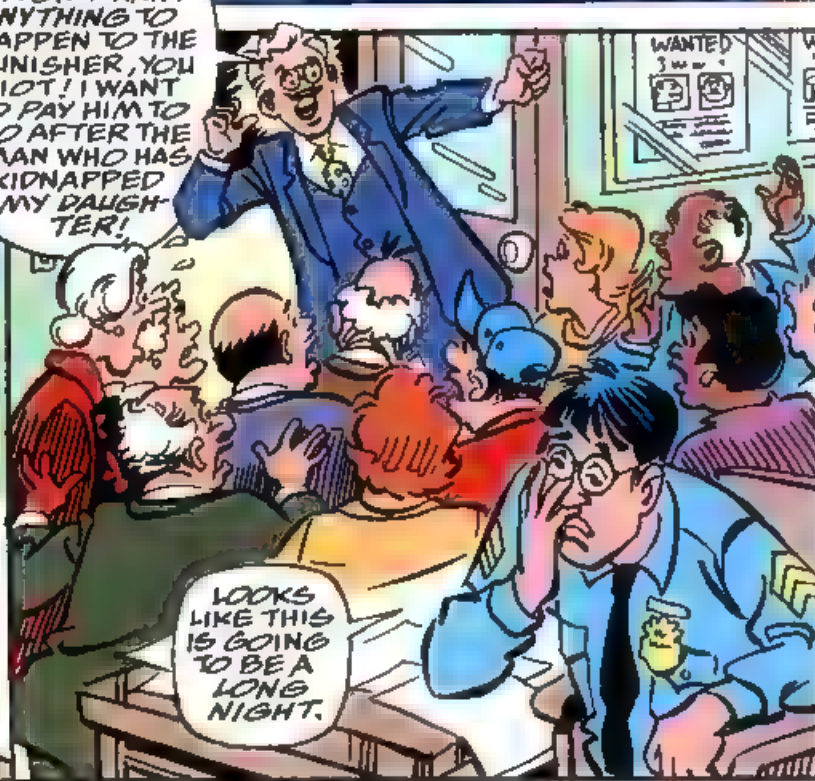
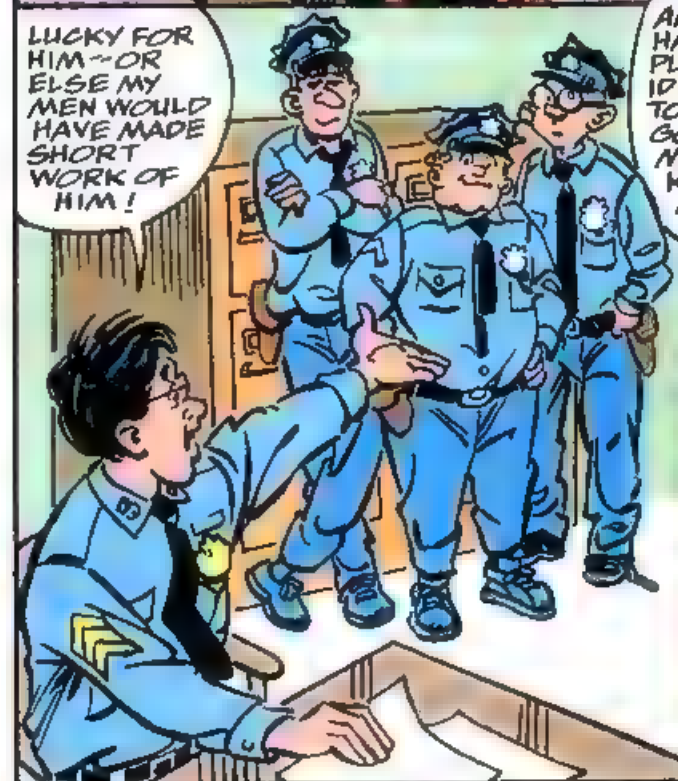
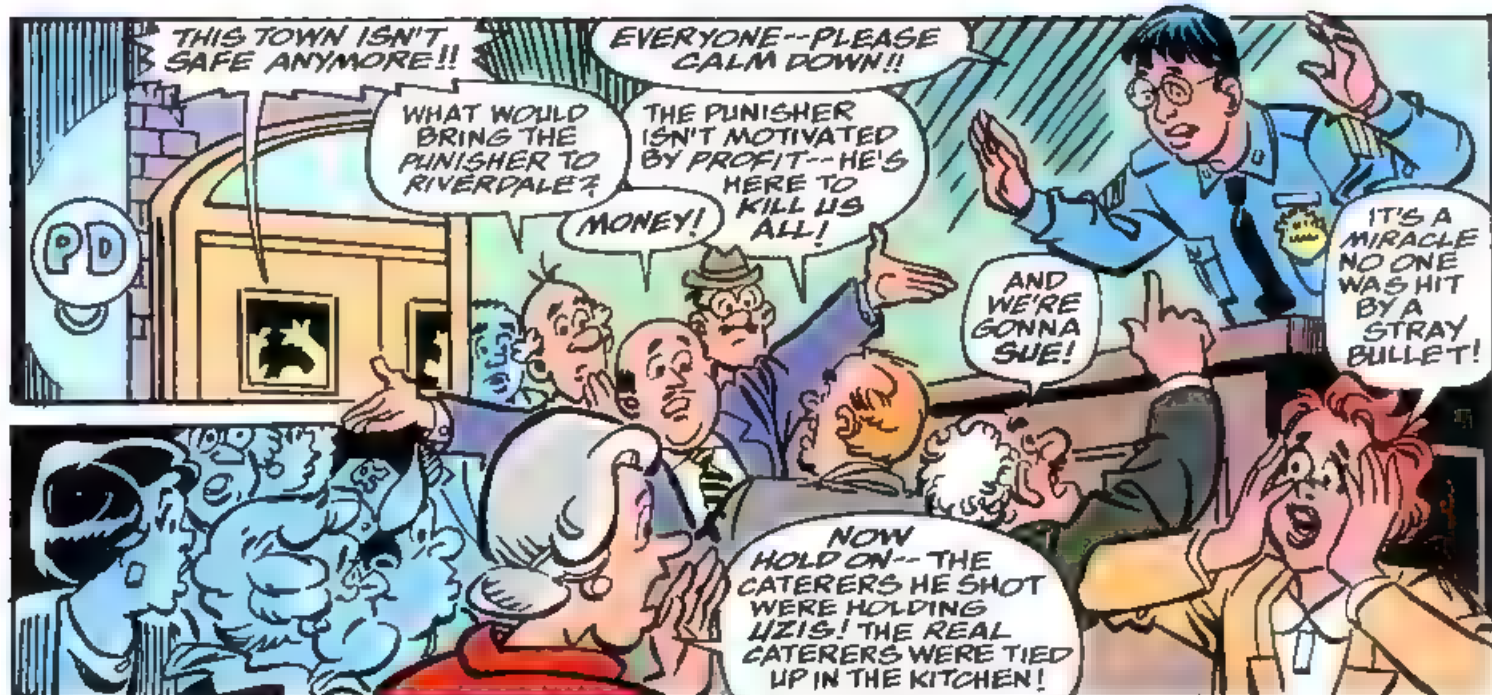


YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MY DOUBLE, AREN'T YOU?

CORRECT. AND MORE IMPORTANTLY...



...I'M HERE TO SEE NO HARM COMES TO RIVERDALE.



ARCHIE'S WAR JOURNAL
00001: YEAH--IT'S
GONNA BE A LONG
NIGHT...

ORDERED A CHOCKLIT SHAKE
FROM POP. HAD A FULL
EVENING--THE SHAKE WENT
DOWN GOOD. REAL GOOD.

FRANK!
HOW ABOUT
A STRAWBERRY
FRAPPE? MY
TREAT!

HE GAVE ME A LOOK
THAT SAID HE WASN'T
HERE FOR THE
DRINKS. JUST AS
WELL. RAN TAB
TO THE MAX
EARLIER
THIS WEEK.

AFTER INCIDENT AT THE
DANCE, WAS BRIEFED ON
QUARRY. MY HUNCH WAS
CORRECT--HE HAS MY
DANGEROUS GOOD LOOKS.
NOW, THAT KILLER SMILE
WE SHARE HAS PUT
VERONICA IN DANGER.
CASTLE WISELY DECIDES
TO JOIN FORCES WITH ME.

FRANK--WHAT ARE WE DOING
BABY-SITTING? ANDREWS
IS BAD ENOUGH--BUT HIS
FRIENDS, TOO?

I WANT TO KEEP
MY EYE ON HIM, MICRO--
HE'D CAUSE MORE TROUBLE
FOR US IF WE LEFT
HIM TO HIS OWN DEVICES.
AS FOR HIS PALE--EVEN
I HAVE MY LAPSES.

FOUND OUT CASTLE'S WORKING
WITH THE FEDS. UNCLE SAM GOT
RIVERDALE P.D. TO PLAY BALL.
CASTLE NEEDED BASE OF
OPERATIONS TO PLAN STRATEGY
--AWAY FROM THE USUAL POLICE
BUREAUCRACY, I RELATE. HAD
MY OWN RUN-IN WITH THE COPS
EARLIER. I SUGGESTED POP'S.

CASTLE CONFERES ON
HIS NEXT MOVE WITH
HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN.
I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL
MINE FINISHES
EATING.

THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT
HAS INFECTED MY TOWN.
RONNIE'S BEEN
KIDNAPPED...

ARCHIE?

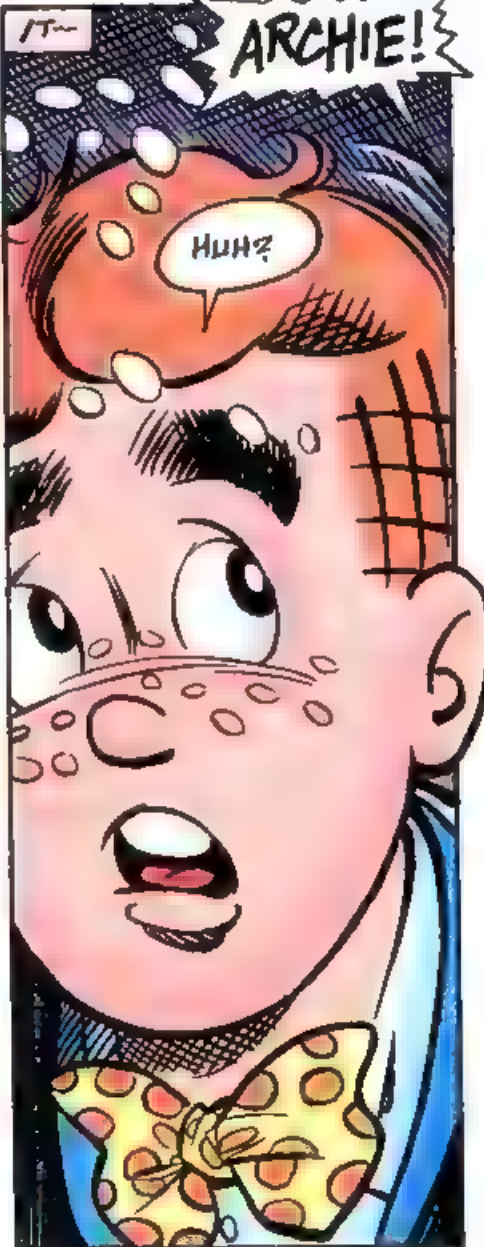
IT'S PAYBACK
TIME.

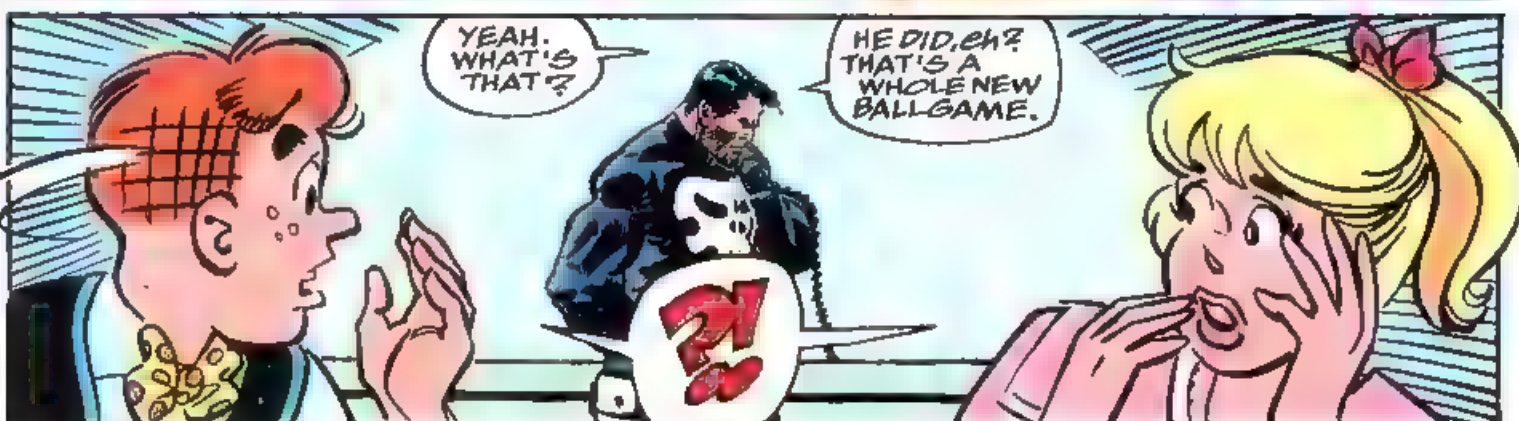
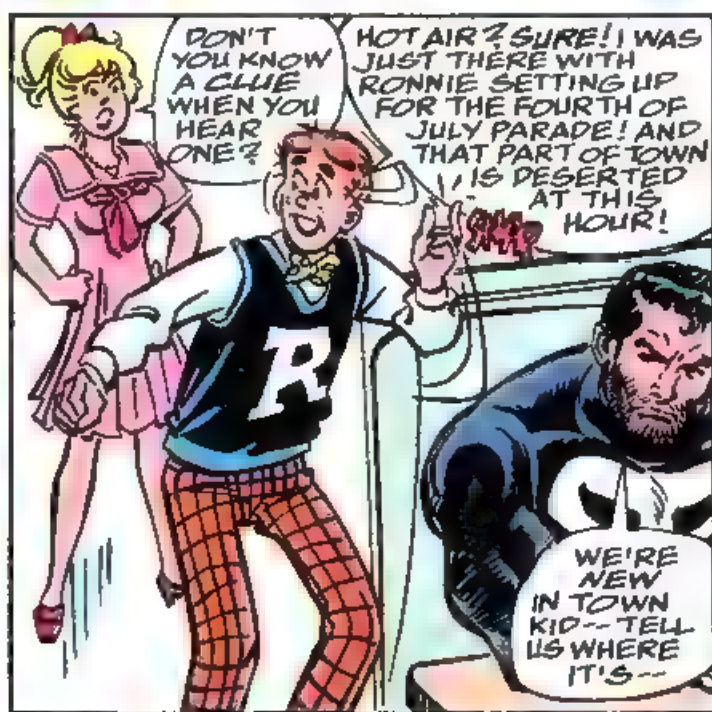
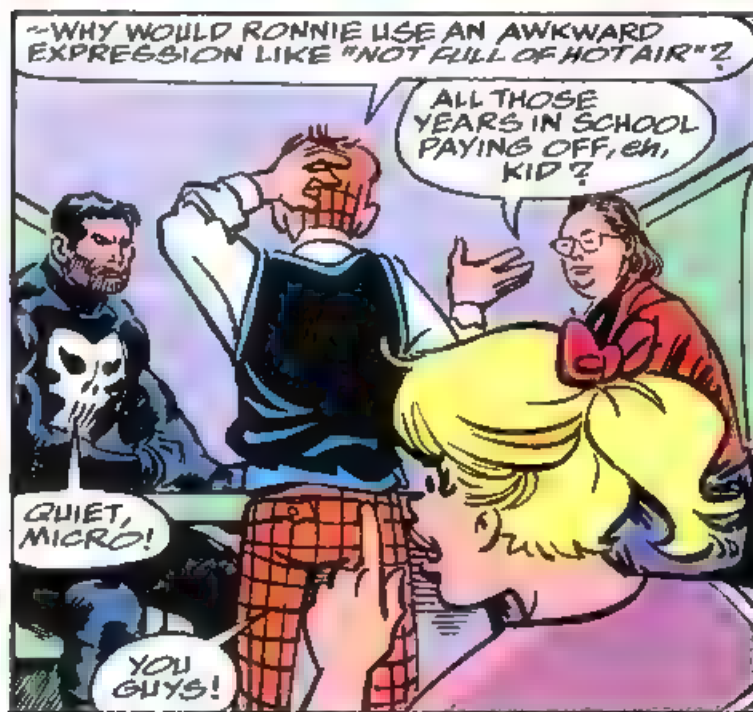
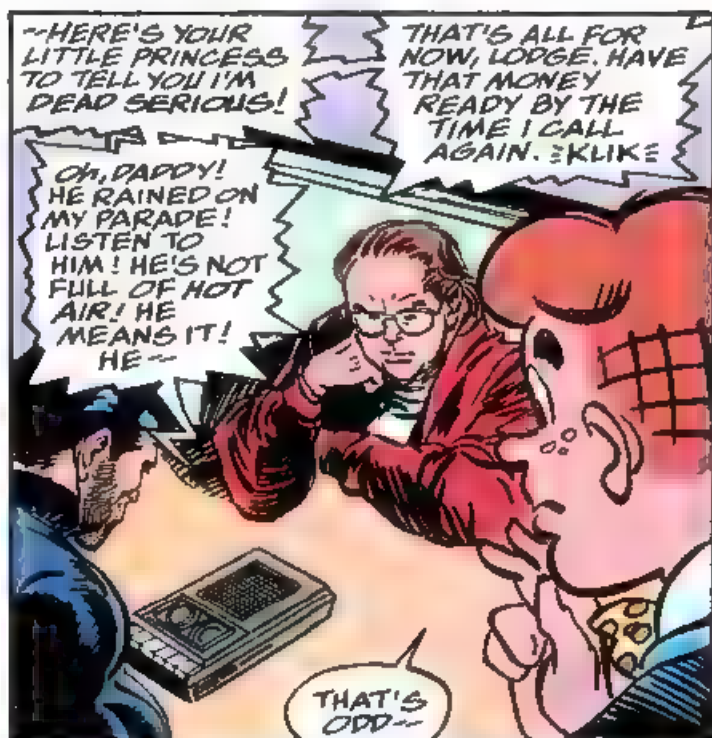
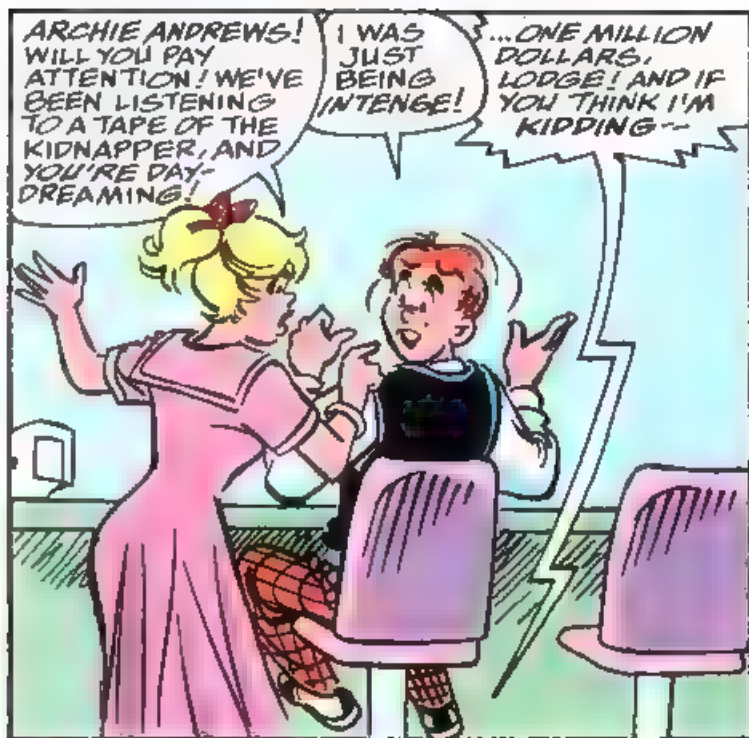
THE WAR
NEVER ENDS.

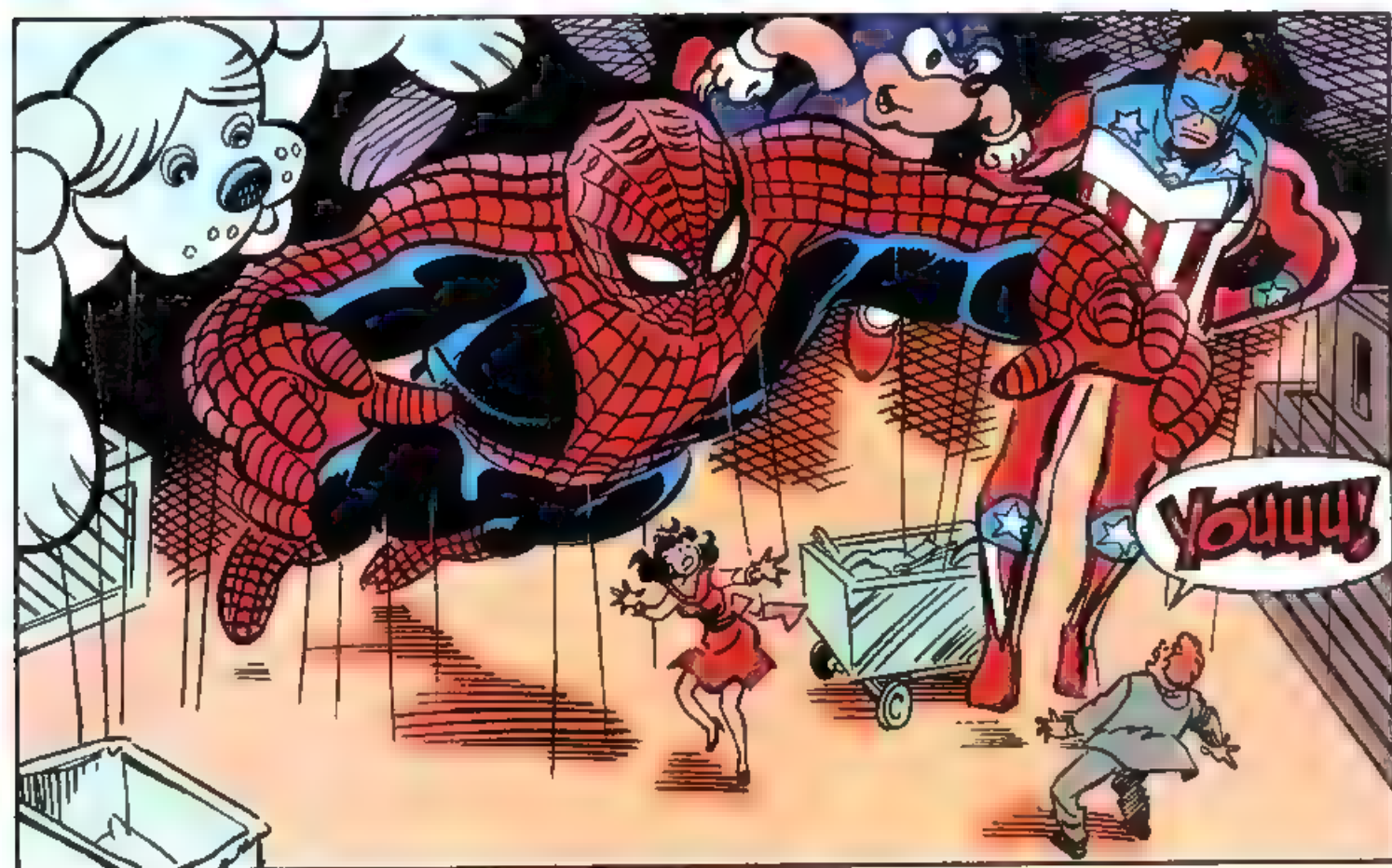
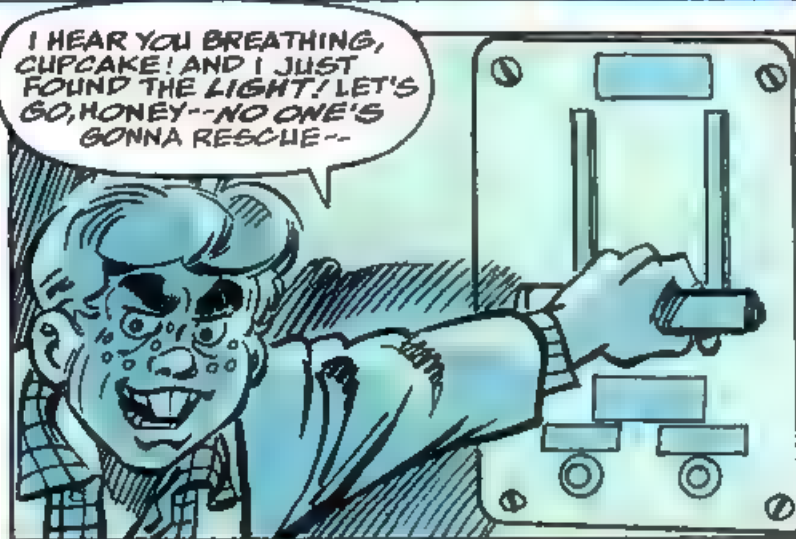
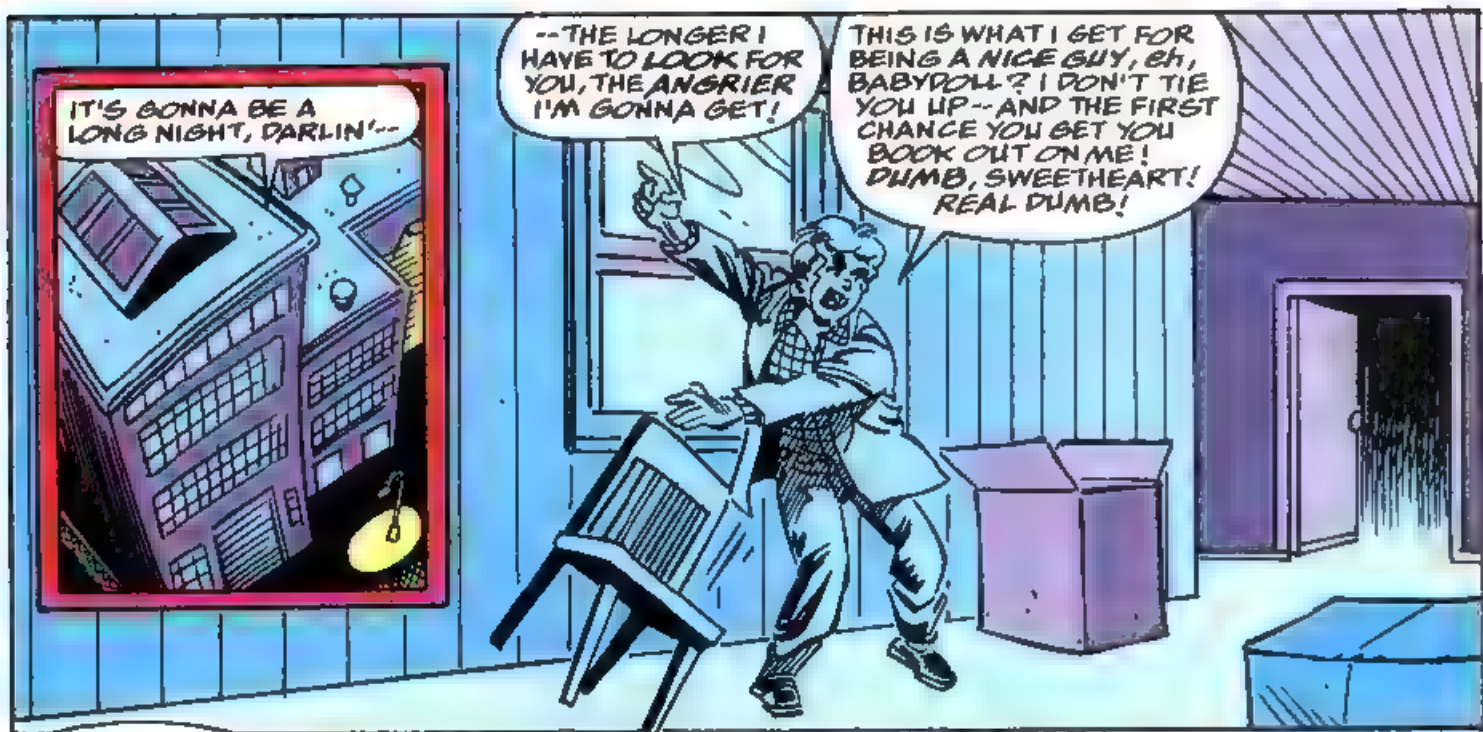
ONE ON ONE.

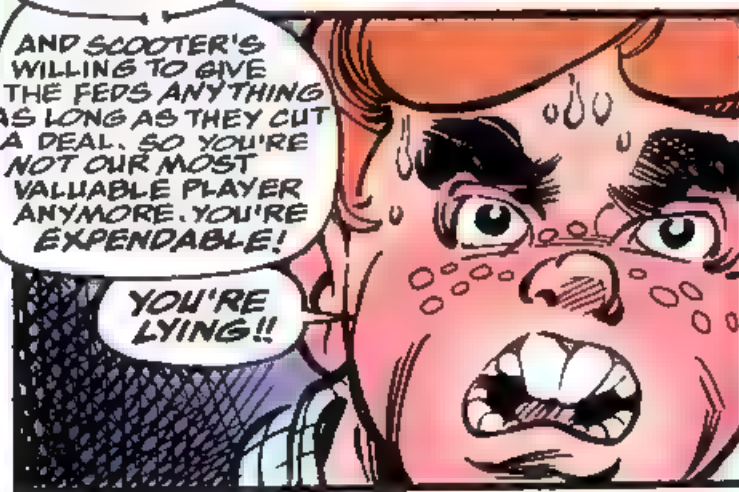
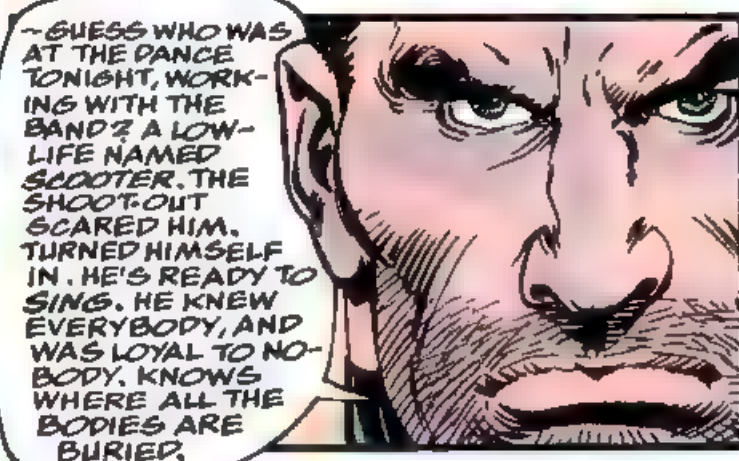
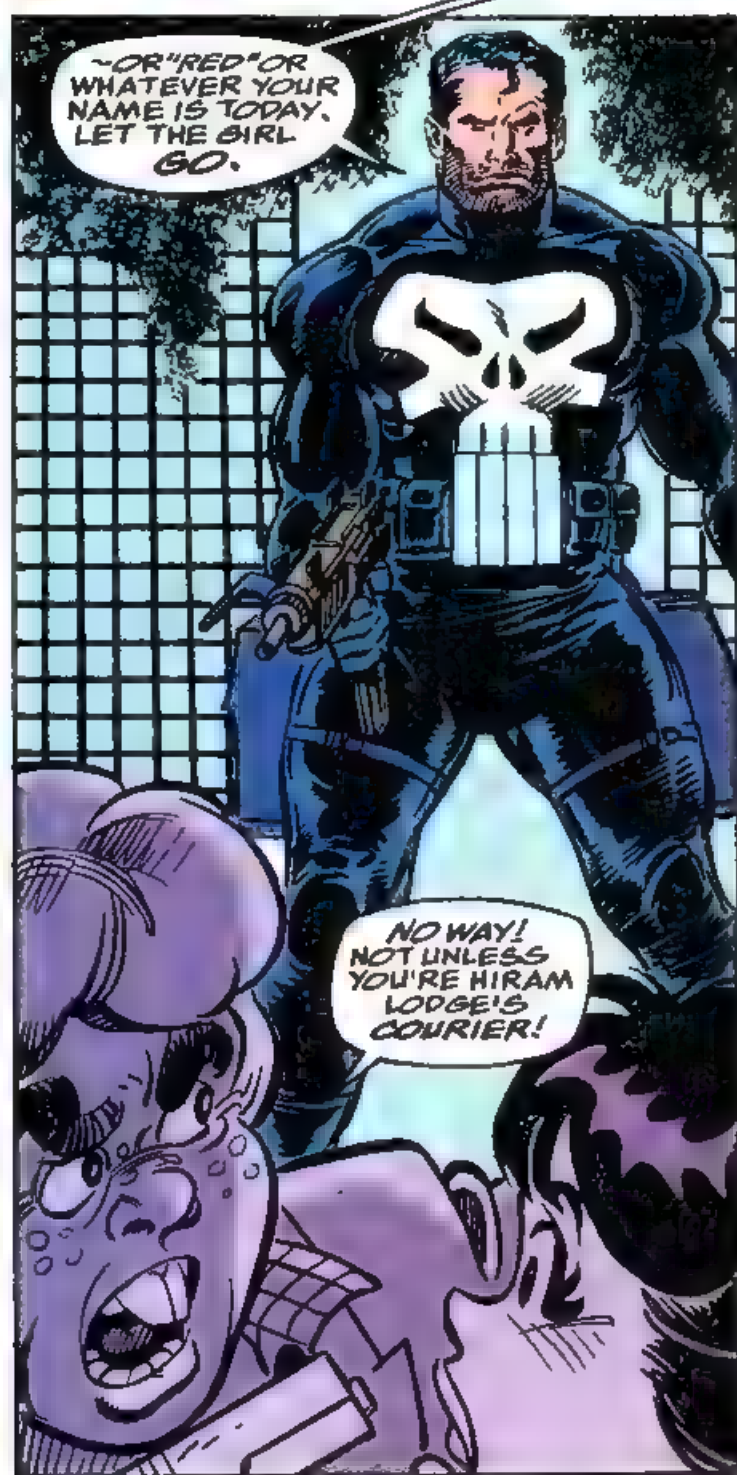
'NOTHER
BURGER,
POP! NEVER
DID GET A
CHANCE
TO EAT
TONIGHT!

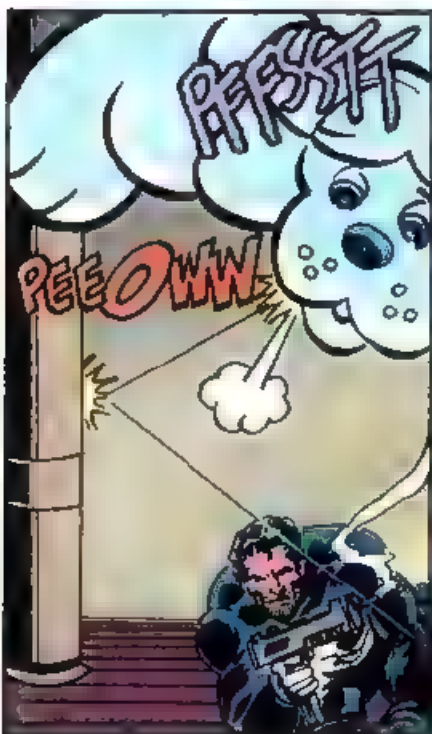
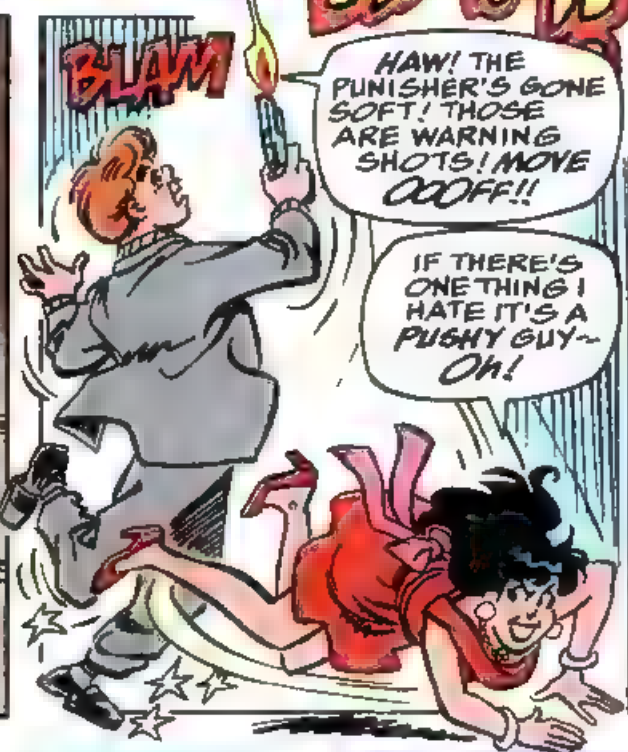
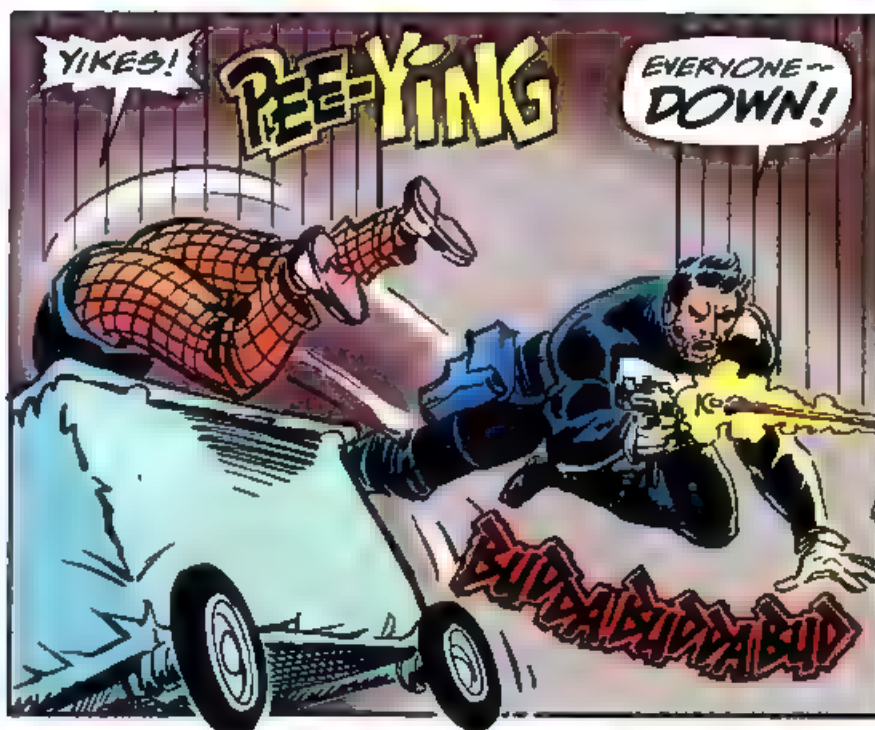
IT'S
CLOBBERIN'
TIME.

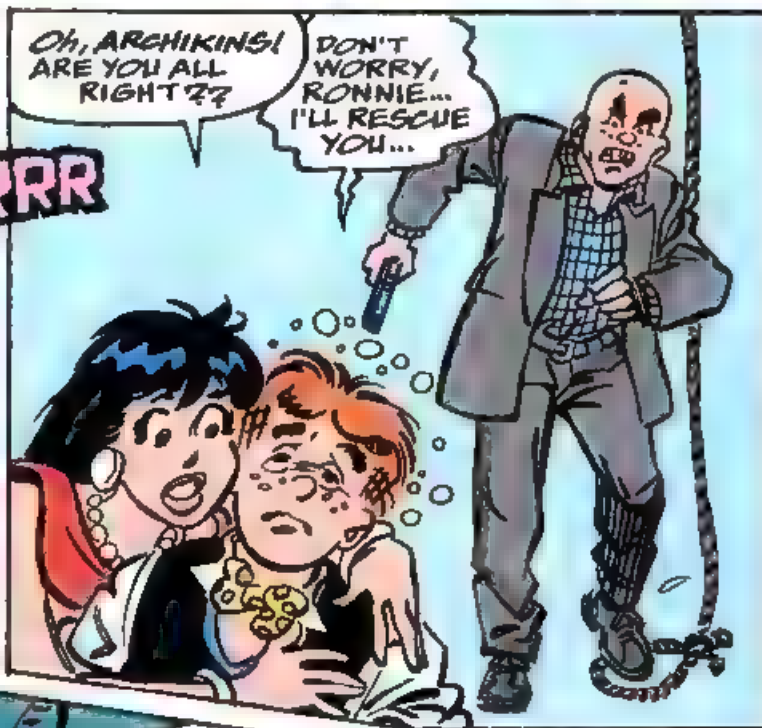
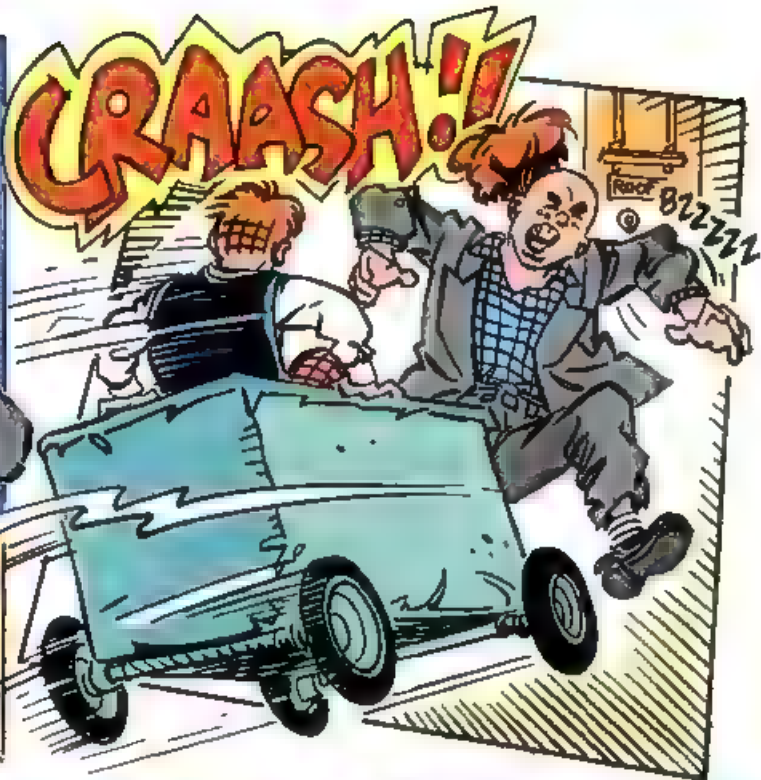
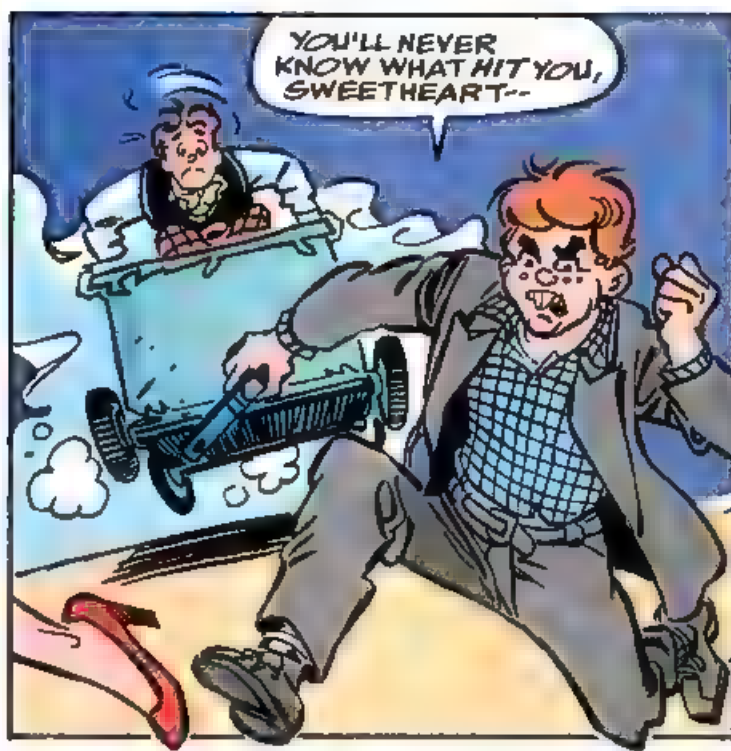












WAR JOURNAL ENTRY 06794:
CONCLUSION: LET QUARRY
SLIP AWAY. FIRST TIME FOR
EVERYTHING, I SUPPOSE.

I DID PROMISE UNCLE SAM
I'D LET QUARRY LIVE. THEY
WANT HIM, THEY CAN GET
HIM. I CAN HEAR THE
CHOPPERS NOW.

AND IF QUARRY ESCAPES?
WHAT CAN HE DO? HIS EMPIRE
IS RUINED, THE OTHER MOBS
ARE AFTER HIM, AND BEST
OF ALL~

WHATTAYA
WAITIN'
FOR?

PUNISHER!
DO SOME-
THINGS!!

CAN'T
BREATHE~
PIGEONS!!
I HATE
PIGEONS!

~HE'LL LIVE
IN FEAR OF
ME!

PSYCHOLOGICAL
WARFARE? FOR
THIS TIME, WHY
NOT? EVERY-
THING ELSE
ABOUT THIS
CASE WAS UN-
PRECEDENTED
IN MY WAR
JOURNAL.

ALL RIGHT!
WHAT'S OUR
NEXT CASE,
FRANK?

Betty's Diary: 6/17

There was never any-
thing like it in the
history of Riverdale,
the day the Punisher
came to town...

Just about the whole town
stayed up all night to see if
Ronnie was okay and catch a
glimpse of Frank (he told me
to call him Frank!). We all
celebrated with an early morn-
ing breakfast at Pop's... That's
the funny thing... I got the
feeling Frank didn't really want
to leave. My dad says Frank's
a psychopath, okay, maybe he
is a tad hostile...

YOU GIVE ME
A SIGNAL
WATCH, SEE~?

...but if the Punisher's the bad guy people say
he is, he'd never have put up with Archie
all night!

THAT WAY, I
CAN CALL YOU
WHENEVER
THERE'S
TROUBLE!

I DON'T
THINK SO.

IT'S BEEN
REAL ARCH,
BUT NOW I'VE GOT
A VERY SPECIAL
LADY TO THANK...



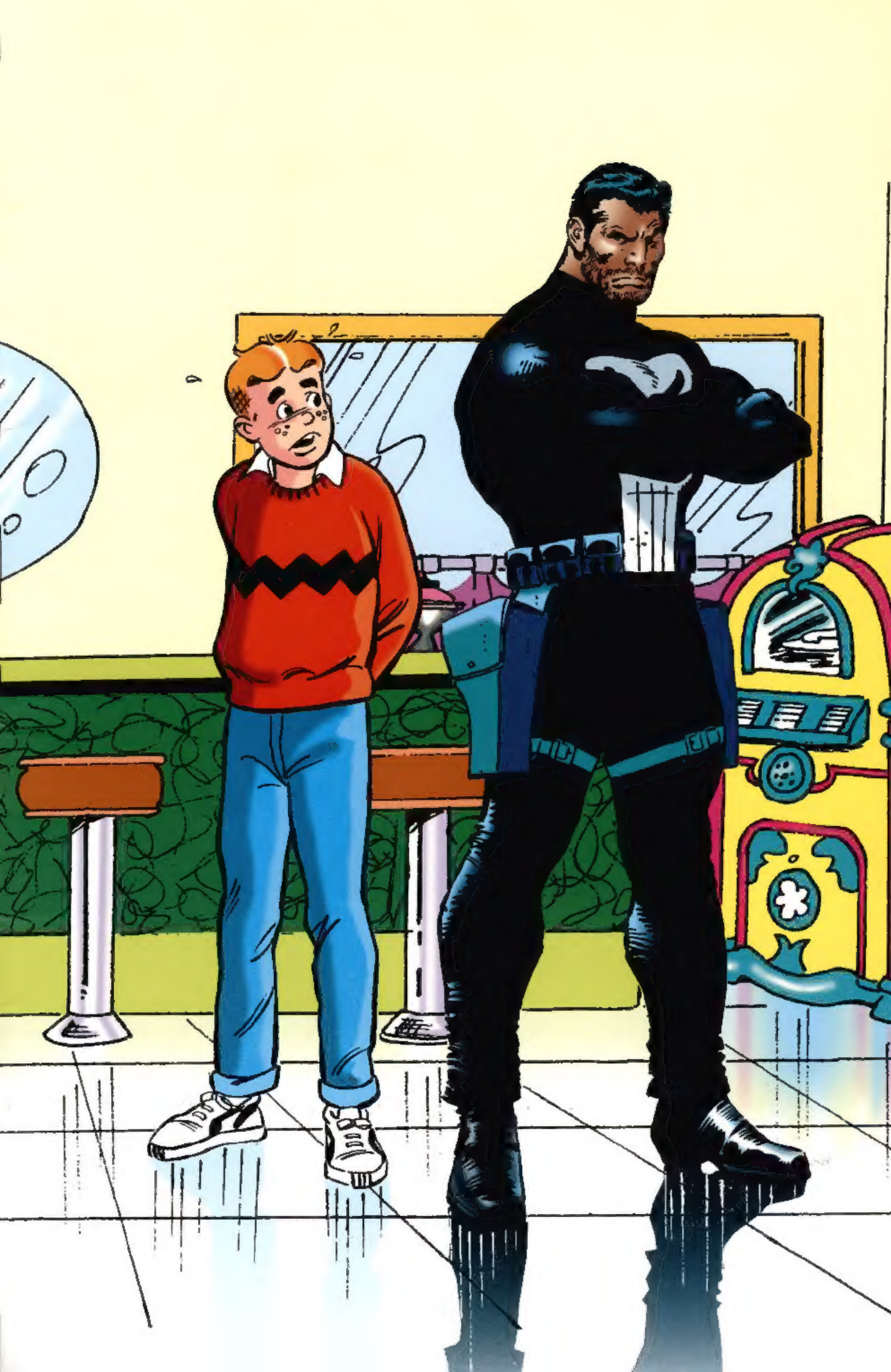


RIVERDALE HIGH Sock-Hop★

I KNEW
THERE'D BE A
CHAPERONE
- BUT THIS IS
RIDICULOUS!

THE TEAM-UP YOU THOUGHT WOULD
NEVER HAPPEN - AND ARCHIE AND
THE PUNISHER WISHES YOU WERE RIGHT!

STAN LEE





01